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WORKS

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

COMPLETE IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LETTERS TO LITERARY LADIES.
CASTLE RACKRENT.
LEONORA.
ESSAY ON IRISH BULLS.

BOSTON:

SAMUEL H. PARKER, NO. 12, CORNHILL;

MUNROE AND FRANCIS, NO. 4, CORNHILL, BOSTON; E. LITTELL, PHILADELPHIA AND TRENTON; R. NORRIS HENRY, NO. 129, BROADWAY, NEW-YORK.

1824.

595026 A

BOSTON:
Printed by Munroe and Francis, No. 4, Cornhill.

LETTERS

FOR

LITERARY LADIES:

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ESSAY

ON THE

NOBLE SCIENCE OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION.

BY

MISS EDGEWORTH.

91X653

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

AS a Second Edition of the following Book has been called for, it has been revised and corrected with that attention which is due from an author to the Public.

The two first Letters upon Female Literature, the Letters to Julia, and the Art of Self-Justification, were printed and paged separately: the publisher afterwards thought proper to join them in one volume, under the title of "LETTERS FOR LITERARY LADIES;" which is applicable only to the two first letters.—The author, however, has thought it better to continue the former name, than to hazard the imputation of publishing on old work under a new title.

In the first edition, the *Second Letter* upon the advantages of cultivating the female understanding, was thought to weaken the cause it was intended to support.—That letter has been written over again; no pains have been spared to improve it, and to assert more distinctly the female right to literature.

Sept. 1st, 1798.

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LETTERS

FOR

LITERARY LADIES.

A Wit, that temperately bright,
With inoffensive light,
All pleasing shone; nor ever past
The decent bounds that wisdom's sober hand,
And sweet benevolence's mild command,
And bashful modesty before it cast.

Lord Lyttelton's Monody.

LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND, UPON THE BIRTH OF A DAUGHTER.

I CONGRATULATE you, my dear Sir, upon the birth of your daughter; and I wish that some of the fairies of ancient times were at hand to endow the damsel with health, wealth, wit, and beauty.—Wit?——I should make a long pause before I accepted of this gift for a daughter—you would make none.

As I know it to be your opinion, that it is in the power of education, more certainly than it was ever believed to be in the power of fairies, to bestow all mental gifts; and as I have heard you say that education should begin as early as possible, I am in haste to offer you my sentiments, lest my advice should come too late.

Your general ideas of the habits and virtues essential to the perfection of the female character nearly agree with mine; but we differ materially as to the cultivation, which it is necessary or expedient to bestow upon the understandings of women: you are a champion for the rights of woman, and insist upon the equality of the sexes: but since the days of chivalry are past, and since modern gallantry permits men to speak at least to one another, in less sublime language of the fair, I may confess to you that I see neither from experience nor analogy, much reason to believe that, in the human species alone, there are no marks of inferiority in the female;—curious and admirable exceptions there may be, but many such have not fallen *within my* observation. I cannot say

that I have been much enraptured either on a first view, or on a closer inspection with female prodigies. Prodigies are scarcely less offensive to my taste than monsters: humanity makes us refrain from expressing disgust at the awkward shame of the one, whilst the intemperate vanity of the other justly provokes ridicule and indignation. I have always observed in the understandings of women who have been too much cultivated, some disproportion between the different faculties of their minds. One power of the mind undoubtedly may be cultivated at the expence of the rest; as we see that one muscle or limb may acquire excessive strength, and an unnatural size, at the expence of the health of the whole body: I cannot think this desirable either for the individual or for society.—The unfortunate people in certain mountains of Switzerland are, some of them, proud of the excrescence by which they are deformed. I have seen women vain of exhibiting mental deformities, which to me appeared no less disgusting. In the course of my life it has never been my good fortune to meet with a female whose mind, in strength, just proportion, and activity, I could compare to that of a sensible man.

Allowing, however, that women are equal to our sex in natural abilities; from their situation in society, from their domestic duties, their taste for dissipation, their love of romance, poetry, and all the lighter parts of literature, their time must be so fully occupied, that they could never have leisure, even supposing that they were capable of that severe application to which our sex submit.—Between persons of equal genius, and equal industry, time becomes the only measure of their acquirements.——Now calculate the time, which is wasted by the fair sex, and tell me how much the start of us they ought to have in the beginning of the race, if they are to reach the goal before us?—It is not possible that women should ever be our equals in knowledge, unless you assert that they are far our superiors in natural capacity.——Not only time but opportunity must be wanting to complete female studies:—we mix with the world without restraint, we converse freely with all classes of people, with men of wit, of science, of learning, with the artist, the mechanic, the labourer; every scene of life is open to our view; every assistance, that foreign or domestic ingenuity can invent, to encourage literary studies, is ours almost exclusively. From academies, colleges, public libraries, private associations of literary men, women are excluded, if not by law, at least by custom, which cannot easily be conquered.——Whenever women appear, even when we seem to admit them as our equals in understanding, every thing assumes a different form; our politeness, delicacy, habits towards the sex forbid us to argue, or to converse with

them as we do with one another:—we see things as they are, but women must always see things through a veil, or cease to be women.—With these insuperable difficulties in their education and in their passage through life, it seems impossible that their minds should ever acquire that vigour and *efficiency*, which accurate knowledge and various experience of life and manners can bestow.

Much attention has lately been paid to the education of the female sex, and you will say, that we have been amply repaid for our care.—That ladies have lately exhibited such brilliant proofs of genius as must dazzle and confound their critics. I do not ask for proofs of genius,——I ask for solid proofs of utility. In which of the useful arts, in which of the exact sciences have we been assisted by female sagacity or penetration?—I should be glad to see a list of discoveries, of inventions, of observations, evincing patient research, of truths established upon actual experiment, or deduced by just reasoning from previous principles:—If these, or any of these, can be presented by a female champion for her sex, I shall be the first to clear the way for her to the Temple of Fame.

I must not speak of my contemporaries, else candour might oblige me to allow, that there are some few instances of great talents applied to useful purposes:—But, except these, what have been the literary productions of women?—In poetry, plays and romances, in the art of imposing upon the understanding by means of the imagination, they have excelled;—but to useful literature they have scarcely turned their thoughts.- I have never heard of any female proficients in science—few have pretended to science till within these few years.

You will tell me, that in the most difficult and most extensive science of politics women have succeeded;—you will cite the names of some illustrious queens.—I am inclined to think, with the Duke of Burgundy, that "queens who reigned well were governed by men, and kings who reigned ill were governed by women."

The isolated examples of a few heroines cannot convince me that it is safe or expedient to trust the sex with power:—their power over themselves has regularly been found to diminish, in proportion as their power over others has been increased.—I should not refer you to the scandalous chronicles of modern times, to volumes of private anecdotes, or to the abominable secret histories of courts, where female influence, and female depravity are synonymous terms; but I appeal to the open equitable page of history, to a body of evidence collected from the testimony of ages, for experiments tried upon the grandest scale of which nature admits, registered by va-

rious hands, without the possibility of collusion, and without a view to any particular system:—from these you must be convinced, that similar consequences have uniformly resulted from the same causes, in nations the most unlike, and at periods the most distant. Trace the history of female nature from the court of Augustus, to the court of Lewis the fourteenth, and tell me whether you can hesitate to acknowledge, that the influence, the liberty, and the *power* of women have been constant concomitants of the moral and political decline of empires;—I say the concomitants: where events are thus invariably connected I might be justified in saying, that they were *causes*—you would call them *effects;* but we need not dispute about the momentary precedence of evils, which are found to be inseparable companions:—they may be alternately cause and effect,—the reality of the connexion is established; it may be difficult to ascertain precisely its nature.

You will assert, that the fatal consequences which have resulted from our trusting the sex with liberty and power, have been originally occasioned by the subjection and ignorance in which they had previously been held, and of our subsequent folly and imprudence, in *throwing the reins of dominion into hands unprepared and uneducated to guide them.* I am at a loss to conceive any system of education that can properly prepare women for the exercise of power.—Cultivate their understandings, "cleanse the visual orb with Euphrasy and Rue," till they can with one comprehensive glance take in "one half at least of round eternity;" still you have no security that their reason will govern their conduct. The moral character seems, even amongst men of superior strength of mind, to have no certain dependence upon the reasoning faculty;—habit, prejudice, taste, example, and the different strength of various passions, form the moral character. We are impelled to action frequently contrary to the belief of our sober reason, and we pursue what we could, in the hour of deliberation, demonstrate to be inconsistent with *that greatest possible share of happiness*, which it is the object of every rational creature to secure. We frequently "think with one species of enthusiasm, and act with another:" and can we expect from women more consistency of conduct, if they are allowed the same liberty?——No one can feel more strongly than you do the necessity and the value of female integrity; no one can more clearly perceive how much in society depends upon the honour of women, and how much it is the interest of every individual, as well as of every state, to guard their virtue, and to preserve inviolate the purity of their manners. Allow me, then, to warn you of the danger of talking in loud strains to the sex of the noble contempt of prejudice. You would look with horror at one who should go to sap the

foundations of the building; beware then how you venture to tear away the ivy which clings to the walls, and braces the loose stones together.

I am by no means disposed to indulge in the fashionable ridicule of prejudice. There is a sentimental, metaphysical argument, which, independently of all others, has lately been used to prevail upon us to relinquish that superiority which strength of body in savage, and strength of mind in civilized nations, secure to man. We are told, that as women are reasonable creatures, they should be governed only by reason; and that we *disgrace* ourselves, and *enslave* them, when we instil even the most useful truths as prejudices.—Morality should, we are told, be founded upon demonstration, not upon sentiment; and we should not require human beings to submit to any laws or customs, without convincing their understandings of the universal utility of these political conventions. When are we to expect this conviction? We cannot expect it from childhood, scarcely from youth; but, from the maturity of the understanding, we are told that we may expect it with certainty.—And of what use can it then be to us? When the habits are fixed, when the character is decided, when the manners are formed, what can be done by the bare conviction of the understanding? What could we expect from that woman whose moral education was to begin at the moment when she was called upon to *act;* and who, without having imbibed in her early years any of the salutary prejudices of her sex, or without having been educated in the amiable acquiescence to well-established maxims of female prudence, should boldly venture to conduct herself by the immediate conviction of her understanding? I care not for the names or titles of my guides; all that I shall enquire is, which is best acquainted with the road. Provided women be conducted quietly to their good, it is scarcely worth their while to dispute about the pompous, metaphysical names or precedency of their motives. Why should they deem it disgraceful to be induced to pursue their interest by what some philosophers are pleased to call *weak* motives? Is it not much less disgraceful to be peaceably governed by weak reasons, than to be incapable of being restrained by the strongest? The dignity of human nature, and the boasted free-will of rational agents, are high-sounding words, likely to impose upon the vanity of the fair sex, as well as upon the pride of ours; but if we analyze the ideas annexed to these terms, to what shall we reduce them? Reason in its highest perfection seems just to arrive at the certainty of instinct; and truth, impressed upon the mind in early youth by the united voice of affection and authority, gives all the real advantages of the most investigating spirit of philosophy. If the result of the thought, experience, and suf-

ferings of one race of beings is (when inculcated upon the belief of the next) to be stigmatized as prejudice, there is an end to all the benefits of history and of education. The mutual intercourse of individuals and of nations must be only for the traffic or amusement of the day. Every age must repeat the same experiments; every man and every nation must make the same mistakes, and suffer the same miseries, whilst the civilization and happiness of the world, if not retrograde in their course, must for ever be stationary.

Let us not, then, despise or teach the other sex to despise the traditional maxims of experience, or those early prepossessions, which may be termed prejudices, but which in reality serve as their moral instinct. I can see neither tyranny on our part, nor slavery on theirs, in this system of education. This sentimental or metaphysical appeal to our candour and generosity has then no real force, and every other argument for the *literary* and *philosophical* education of women, and for the extraordinary cultivation of their understandings, I have examined.

You probably imagine, that, by the superior ingenuity and care you may bestow on your daughter's education, you shall make her an exception to general maxims, you shall give her all the blessings of a literary cultivation, and at the same time preserve her from all the follies, and faults, and evils, which have been found to attend the character of a literary lady.

Systems produce projects; and as projects in education are of all others the most hazardous, they should not be followed till after the most mature deliberation: though it may be natural, is it wise for any man to expect extraordinary success, from his efforts or his precautions, beyond what has ever been the share of those, who have had motives as strong for care and for exertion, and some of whom were possibly his equals in ability? Is it not incumbent upon you, as a parent and as a philosopher, to calculate accurately what you have to fear, as well as what you have to hope? You can, at present, with a sober degree of interest, bear to hear me enumerate the evils, and ridicule the foibles, incident to literary ladies; but if your daughter were actually in this class, you would not think it friendly if I were to attack them. In this favourable moment, then, I beg you to hear me with temper; and as I touch upon every danger and every fault, consider cautiously whether you have a certain preventative or a specific remedy in store for each of them.

Women of literature are much more numerous of late than they were a few years ago. They make a class in society, they fill the public eye, and have acquired a degree of consequence and an appropriate character. The esteem of private friends, and the admiration of the public for their talents, are

circumstances highly flattering to their vanity, and as such I will allow them to be substantial pleasures. I am also ready to acknowledge that a taste for literature adds much to the happiness of life, and that women may enjoy to a certain degree this happiness as well as men. But with literary women this silent happiness seems at best but a subordinate consideration; it is not by the treasures they possess, but by those which they have an opportunity of displaying, that they estimate their wealth. To obtain public applause, they are betrayed too often into a miserable ostentation of their learning. Coxe tells us, that certain Russian ladies split their pearls, in order to make a greater display of finery.

The pleasure of being admired for wit or erudition I cannot exactly measure in a female mind; but state it to be as delightful as you can imagine it to be, there are evils attendant upon it, which, in the estimation of a prudent father, may overbalance the good. The intoxicating effect of wit upon the brain has been well remarked by a poet, who was a friend to the fair sex, and too many ridiculous, and too many disgusting, examples confirm the truth of the observation. The deference that is paid to genius sometimes makes the fair sex forget, that genius will be respected only when united with discretion. Those who have acquired fame, fancy that they can afford to sacrifice reputation. I will suppose, however, that their heads shall be strong enough to bear inebriating admiration; and that their conduct shall be essentially irreproachable, yet they will show in their manners and conversation that contempt of inferior minds, and that neglect of common forms and customs, which will provoke the indignation of fools, and which cannot escape the censure of the wise. Even whilst we are secure of their innocence, we dislike that daring spirit in the female sex, which delights to oppose the common opinions of society, and from apparent trifles we draw unfavourable omens, which experience too often confirms. You will ask me why I should suppose that wits are more liable to be spoiled by admiration than beauties, who have usually a larger share of it, and who are not more exempt from vanity? Those, who are vain of trifling accomplishments, of rank, of riches, or of beauty, depend upon the world for their immediate gratification. They are sensible of their dependence; they listen with deference to the maxims, and attend with anxiety to the opinions of those, from whom they expect their reward and their daily amusements. In their subjection consists their safety, whilst women, who neither feel dependent for amusement nor for self-approbation upon company and public places, are apt to consider this subjection as humiliating, if not insupportable: perceiving their own superiority, they despise, and even set at defiance, the opinions

of their acquaintance of inferior abilities: contempt, where it cannot be openly retorted, produces aversion, not the less to be dreaded, because constrained to silence: envy, considered as the involuntary tribute, extorted by merit, is flattering to pride; and I know, that many women delight to excite envy, even whilst they affect to fear its consequences: but they who imprudently provoke it, are little aware of the torments they prepare for themselves.—"Cover your face well before you disturb the hornet's nest," was a maxim of the *experienced* Catharine de Medicis.

Men of literature, if we may trust to the bitter expressions of anguish in their writings, and in their private letters, feel acutely all the stings of envy. Women, who have more susceptibility of temper, and less strength of mind, and who, from the delicate nature of their reputation, are more exposed to attack, are also less able to endure it. Malignant critics, when they cannot attack an author's peace in his writings, frequently scrutinize his private life; and every personal anecdote is published without regard to truth or propriety. How will the delicacy of the female character endure this treatment? How will her friends bear to see her pursued even in domestic retirement, if she should be wise enough to make that retirement her choice? How will they like to see premature memoirs and spurious collections of familiar letters, published by needy booksellers or designing enemies? Yet to all these things men of letters are subject: and such must literary ladies expect, if they attain to any degree of eminence.—Judging, then, from the experience of our sex, I may pronounce envy to be one of the evils which women of uncommon genius have to dread. "Censure," says a celebrated writer, "is a tax which every man must pay to the public, who seeks to be eminent." Women must expect to pay it doubly.

Your daughter, perhaps, shall be above scandal. She shall despise the idle whisper, and the common tattle of her sex; her soul shall be raised above the ignorant and the frivolous; she shall have a relish for higher conversation, and a taste for higher society: but where is she to find, or how is she to obtain this society? You make her incapable of friendship with her own sex. Where is she to look for friends, for companions, for equals? Amongst men? Amongst what class of men? Not amongst men of business, or men of gallantry, but amongst men of literature.

Learned men have usually chosen for their wives, or for their companions, women who were rather below than above the standard of mediocrity: this seems to me natural and reasonable. Such men, probably, feel their own incapacity for the daily business of life, their ignorance of the world, their

slovenly habits, and neglect of domestic affairs. They do not want wives who have precisely their own defects; they rather desire to find such as shall, by the opposite habits and virtues, supply their deficiencies. I do not see why two books should marry, any more than two estates. Some few exceptions might be quoted against Stuart's observations. I have just seen, under the article "A Literary Wife," in D'Israeli's Curiosities of Literature, an account of Francis Phidelphus, a great scholar in the fifteenth century, who was so desirous of acquiring the Greek language in perfection, that he travelled to Constantinople in search of a *Grecian wife:* the lady proved a scold. "But to do justice to the name of Theodora," as this author adds, "she has been honourably mentioned in the French Academy of Sciences." I hope this proved an adequate compensation to her husband for his domestic broils.

Happy Madame Dacier! you found a husband suited to your taste! "You and Monsieur Dacier, if D'Alembert tells the story rightly, once cooked a dish in concert, by a receipt, which you found in Apicius, and you both sat down and ate of your learned ragout till you were both like to die."

Were I sure, my dear friend, that every literary lady would be equally fortunate in finding in a husband a man who would sympathize in her tastes, I should diminish my formidable catalogue of evils. But alas! Monsieur Dacier is no more! "and we shall never live to see his fellow." Literary ladies will, I am afraid, be losers in love as well as in friendship, by their superiority.—Cupid is a timid, playful child, and is frightened at the helmet of Minerva. It has been observed, that gentlemen are not apt to admire a prodigious quantity of learning and masculine acquirements in the fair sex;—we usually consider a certain degree of weakness, both of mind and body, as friendly to female grace. I am not absolutely of this opinion, yet I do not see the advantage of supernatural force, either of body or mind, to female excellence. Hercules-Spinster found his strength rather an incumbrance than an advantage.

Superiority of mind must be united with great temper and generosity, to be tolerated to those who are forced to submit to its influence. I have seen witty and learned ladies, who did not seem to think it at all incumbent upon them to sacrifice any thing to the sense of propriety. On the contrary, they seemed to take both pride and pleasure in shewing the utmost stretch of their strength, regardless of the consequences, panting only for victory. Upon such occasions, when the adversary has been a husband or a father, I must acknowledge that I have felt sensations, which few ladies can easily believe they excite. Airs and graces I can bear as well as another—but airs without graces, no man thinks himself bound

to bear; and learned airs least of all. Ladies of high rank, in the Court of Parnassus, are apt, sometimes, to claim precedency out of their own dominions, which creates much confusion, and generally ends in their being affronted. That knowledge of the world, which keeps people in their proper places, they will never learn from the Muses.

Moliere has pointed out with all the force of comic ridicule, in the Femmes Savantes, that a lady who aspires to the sublime delights of philosophy and poetry, must forego the simple pleasures, and will despise the duties of domestic life. I should not expect that my house affairs would be with haste despatched by a Desdemona, weeping over some unvarnished tale, or petrified with some history of horrors, at the very time when she should be ordering dinner, or paying the butcher's bill.—I should have the less hope of rousing her attention to my culinary concerns and domestic grievances, because I should probably incur her contempt for hinting at these sublunary matters, and her indignation for supposing that she ought to be employed in such degrading occupations. I have heard that if these sublime geniuses are wakened from their reveries by the *appulse* of external circumstances, they start and exhibit all the perturbation and amazement of *cataleptic* patients.

Sir Charles Harrington, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, addressed a copy of verses to his wife, "on Women's Virtues:"—these he divides into "the private, *civill*, and heroyke; the private belong to the country housewife, whom it concerneth chiefly—

> "The fruit, malt, hops, to tend, to dry, to utter,
> To beat, strip, spin the wool, the hemp, the flax,
> Breed poultry, gather honey, try the wax,
> And more than all, to have good cheese and butter.
> Then next a step, but yet a large step higher,
> Came civill vertue fitter for the citty,
> With modest looks, good cloths, and answers witty.
> These baser things not done, but guided by her."

As for heroyke vertue, and heroyke dames, honest Sir Charles would have nothing to do with them.

Allowing, however, that you could combine all these virtues —that you could form a perfect whole, a female wonder from every creature's best, dangers still threaten you. How will you preserve your daughter from that desire of universal admiration, which will ruin all your work? How will you, along with all the pride of knowledge, give her that "retiring modesty," which is supposed to have more charms for our sex, than the fullest display of wit and beauty.

The *fair Pauca of Thoulouse* was so called, because she was so fair, that no one could live either with or without beholding

her:—whenever she came forth from her own mansion, which, history observes, she did very seldom, such impetuous crowds rushed to obtain a sight of her, that limbs were broken and lives were lost wherever she appeared. She ventured abroad less frequently—the evil increased—till at length the magistrates of the city issued an edict commanding the fair Pauca, under the pain of perpetual imprisonment, to appear in broad day-light for one hour, every week, in the public market-place.

Modern ladies, by frequenting public places so regularly, declare their approbation of the wholesome regulations of these prudent magistrates. Very different was the crafty policy of the Prophet Mahomet, who forbad his worshippers even to paint his picture. The Turks have pictures of the hand, the foot, the features, of Mahomet, but no representation of the whole face or person is allowed. The portraits of our beauties, in our exhibition-room, shew a proper contempt of this insidious policy; and those learned and ingenious ladies, who publish their private letters, select maxims, secret anecdotes, and family memoirs, are entitled to our thanks, for thus presenting us with full lengths of their minds.

Can you expect, my dear Sir, that your daughter, with all the genius and learning which you intend to give her, should refrain from these imprudent exhibitions? Will she "yield her charms of mind with sweet delay?" Will she, in every moment of her life, recollect, that the fatal desire for universal applause always defeats its own purpose, especially if the purpose be to win our love as well as our admiration? It is in vain to tell me, that more enlarged ideas in our sex would alter our tastes, and alter even the associations which now influence our passions. The captive who has numbered the links of his chains, and who has even discovered how those chains are constructed, is not therefore nearer to the recovery of his liberty.

Besides, it must take a length of time to alter associations and opinions, which, if not *just*, are at least *common* in our sex. You cannot expect even that conviction should operate immediately upon the public taste. You will, in a few years, have educated your daughter; and if the world be not educated exactly at the right time to judge of her perfections, to admire and love them, you will have wasted your labour, and you will have sacrificed your daughter's happiness: that happiness, analyze it as a man of the world or as a philosopher, must depend on friendship, love, the exercise of her virtues, the just performance of all the duties of life, and the self-approbation arising from the consciousness of good conduct.

I am, my dear friend,

Yours sincerely.

ANSWER, TO THE PRECEDING LETTER.

I HAVE as little taste for Madame Dacier's learned ragout as you can have, my dear Sir; and I pity the great scholar, who travelled to Constantinople for the termagant Theodora, believing, as you do, that the honourable mention made of her by the French Academy of Sciences could be no adequate compensation to her husband for domestic disquiet: but the lady's learning was not essential to his misfortune; he might have met with a scolding dame, though he had not married a Grecian. A profusion of vulgar aphorisms in the dialects of all the countries in England, proverbs in Welch, Scottish, French, Spanish, Italian, and Hebrew, might be adduced to prove, that scolds are to be found amongst all classes of women. I am, however, willing, to allow, that the more learning, and wit, and eloquence a lady possesses, the more troublesome and the more dangerous she may become as a wife or daughter, unless she is also possessed of good sense and good temper. Of your honest Sir Charles Harrington's two pattern wives, I think I should prefer the country housewife, with whom I could be sure of having good cheese and butter, to the *citty dame* with her good clothes and answers witty.—I should be afraid that these answers witty might be turned against me, and might prove the torment of my life.—You, who have attended to female disputants, must have remarked, that, learned or unlearned, they seldom know how to reason; they assert and declaim, employ wit, and eloquence, and sophistry, to confute, persuade, or abash their adversaries, but distinct reasoning they neither use nor comprehend.—Till women learn to reason, it is in vain that they acquire learning.

You are satisfied, I am sure, with this acknowledgment.—I will go farther, and at once give up to you all the learned ladies that exist, or that ever have existed: but under this denomination, Literary Ladies, I mean women who have cultivated their understandings, not for the purposes of parade, but with the desire to make themselves useful and agreeable. I estimate the value of a woman's abilities and acquirements by the degree in which they contribute to her happiness.

You think yourself happy because you are wise, said a philosopher to a pedant.—I think myself wise because I am happy.

You tell me, that even supposing I could educate my daughter so as to raise her above the common faults and follies of

her sex; even supposing I could give her an enlarged understanding, and literature free from pedantry, she would be in danger of becoming unhappy, because she would not, amongst her own sex, find friends suited to her taste, nor amongst our's admirers adequate to her expectations; you represent her as in the situation of the poor flying fish, exposed to dangerous enemies in her own element, yet certain, if she tries to soar above them, of being pounced upon by the hawk-eyed critics of the higher region.

You allow, however, that women of literature are much more numerous of late than they were a few years ago; that they make a class in society, and have acquired a considerable degree of consequence, and an appropriate character; how can you then fear that a woman of cultivated understanding should be driven from the society of her own sex in search of dangerous companions amongst ours? In the female world she will be neither without an equal nor without a judge; she will not have much to fear from envy because its malignant eye will not fix upon one object exclusively, when there are numbers to distract its attention, and share the stroke. The fragile nature of female friendships, the petty jealousies which break out at the ball or in the drawing-room, have been from time immemorial the jest of mankind. Trifles light as air will necessarily excite not only the jealousy, but the envy of those who think only of trifles. Give them more employment for their thoughts, give them a nobler spirit of emulation, and we shall hear no more of these paltry feuds; give them more useful and more interesting subjects of conversation, and they become not only more agreeable, but safer companions for each other.

Unmarried women, who have stored their minds with knowledge, who have various tastes and literary occupations, who can amuse and be amused in the conversation of well informed people, are in no danger of becoming burthensome to their friends or to society: though they may not be seen haunting every place of amusement, or of public resort, they are not isolated or forlorn; by a variety of associations they are connected with the world, and their sympathy is expanded and supported by the cultivation of their understandings, nor can it sink, settle, and concentrate upon cats, parrots, and monkies. How far the human heart may be contracted by ignorance it is difficult to determine; but I am little inclined to envy the *simple* pleasures of those whose understandings are totally uncultivated.—Sir William Hamilton, in his account of the last eruption of Mount Vesuvius, gives us a curious picture of the excessive ignorance and stupidity of some nuns in a convent at Torre del Greco:—one of these nuns was found warming herself at the red-hot lava, which had

rolled up to the window of her cell. It was with the greatest difficulty that these scarcely rational beings could be made to comprehend the nature of their danger; and when at last they were prevailed upon to quit the convent, and were advised to carry with them whatever they thought most valuable, they loaded themselves with sweetmeats.—Those who wish for ignorant wives may find them in other parts of the world as well as in Italy.

I do not pretend, that even by cultivating my daughter's understanding I can secure for her a husband suited to her taste, it will therefore be prudent to make her felicity in some degree independent of matrimony. Many parents have sufficient kindness and foresight to provide, in point of fortune, for their daughters, but few consider that if a single life should be their choice or their doom, something more is necessary to secure respect and happiness for them in the decline of life. The silent *unreproved* pleasures of literature are the sure resource of those who have cultivated minds; those who have not must wear out their disconsolate unoccupied old age as chance directs.

When you say that men of superior understanding dislike the appearance of extraordinary strength of mind in the fair sex, you probably mean that the display of that strength is disgusting, and you associate with the idea of strength of mind, masculine, arrogant, or pedantic manners; but there is no necessary connexion between these things; and it seems probable, that the faults usually ascribed to learned ladies, like those peculiar to learned men, may have arisen in a great measure from circumstances which the progress of civilization in society has much altered.

In the times of ignorance, men of deep science were considered by the vulgar as a class of necromancers, and they were looked upon alternately with terror and admiration; and learned men imposed upon the vulgar by assuming strange airs of mystery and self-importance, wore long beards and solemn looks; they spoke and wrote in a phraseology peculiar to themselves, and affected to consider the rest of mankind as beneath their notice; but since knowledge has been generally diffused, all this affectation has been laid aside; and though we now and then hear of men of genius who indulge themselves in peculiarities, yet upon the whole the manners of literary men are not strikingly, nor wilfully different from those of the rest of the world. The peculiarities of literary women will also disappear as their numbers increase. You are disgusted by their ostentation of learning. Have patience with them, my dear Sir; their taste will become more simple when they have been taught by experience that this parade is offensive: even the bitter expression of your dis-

gust may be advantageous to those whose manners are yet to be formed; they will at least learn from it what to avoid; and your letter may perhaps hereafter be of service in my daughter's education.—It is scarcely to be supposed that a girl of good understanding would deliberately imitate the faults and follies which she hears ridiculed during her childhood by those whom she esteems.

As to your dread of prodigies, that will subside:—prodigies are heard of most frequently during the ages of ignorance. A woman may now possess a considerable stock of information without being gazed upon as a miracle of learning; and there is not much danger of her being vain of accomplishments which cease to be astonishing. Nor will her peace be disturbed by the idle remarks of the ignorant vulgar.——A literary lady is no longer a sight; the spectacle is now too common to attract curiosity; the species of animal is too well known even to admit of much exaggeration in the description of its appearance. A lady riding on horseback upon a side-saddle is not thought a wonderful thing by the common people in England; but when an English lady rode upon a side-saddle in an Italian city, where the sight was unusual, she was universally gazed at by the populace; to some she appeared an object of astonishment, to others of compassion:—"Ah Poverina!" they exclaimed, "n'ha che una gambia!"

The same objects excite different emotions in different situations, and to judge what will astonish or delight any given set of people some years hence, we must consider not merely what is the fashion of to-day, but whither the current of opinion runs, and what is likely to be the fashion of hereafter.—You must have observed, that the public opinion is at present more favourable to the cultivation of the understanding of the female sex, than it was some years ago; more attention is paid to the education of women, more knowledge and literature are expected from them in society.—From the literary lady of the present day, something more is expected than that she should know how to spell and to write better than Swift's celebrated Stella, whom he reproves for writing *Villian* and *Daenger*:—Perhaps this very Stella was an object of envy in her own day to those who were her inferiors in literature. No man wishes his wife to be obviously less cultivated than those of her own rank; and something more is now required, even from ordinary talents, than what distinguished the accomplished lady of the last century. What the standard of excellence may be in the next age we cannot ascertain, but we may guess that the taste for literature will continue to be progressive; therefore, even if you assume that the education of the female sex should be guided by the taste and reigning opinions of ours, and that it should be the object.

of their lives to win and keep our hearts, you must admit the expediency of attending to that fashionable demand for literature, and the fine arts, which has arisen in society.

No woman can foresee what may be the taste of the man with whom she may be united; much of her happiness, however, will depend upon her being able to conform her taste to his; for this reason I should therefore, in female education, cultivate the general powers of the mind, rather than any particular faculty. I do not desire to make my daughter merely a musician, a painter, or a poet; I do not desire to make her merely a botanist, a mathematician, or a chemist; but I wish to give her early the habit of industry and attention, the love of knowledge, and the power of reasoning; these will enable her to attain to excellence in any pursuit to which she may direct her talents. You will observe, that many things which formerly were thought above the comprehension of women, or unfit for their sex, are now acknowledged to be perfectly within the compass of their abilities, and suited to their situation.—Formerly the fair sex was kept in Turkish ignorance; every means of acquiring knowledge was discountenanced by fashion, and impracticable even to those who despised fashion;—our books of science were full of unintelligible jargon, and mystery veiled pompous ignorance from public contempt; but now writers must offer their discoveries to the public in distinct terms, which every body may understand; technical language no longer supplies the place of knowledge, and the art of teaching has been carried to such perfection, that a degree of knowledge may now with ease be obtained in the course of a few years, which formerly it was the business of a life to attain. All this is much in favour of female literature. Ladies have become ambitious to superintend the education of their children, and hence they have been induced to instruct themselves, that they may be able to direct and inform their pupils. The mother, who now aspires to be the esteemed and beloved instructress of her children must have a considerable portion of knowledge. Science has of late "*been enlisted under the banners of imagination*" by the irresistible charms of genius; by the same power her votaries will be led "*from the looser analogies which dress out the imagery of poetry to the stricter ones which form the ratiocination of philosophy.*"*—Botany has become fashionable; in time it may become useful, if it be not so already. Chemistry will follow Botany. Chemistry is a science well suited to the talents and situation of women; it is not a science of parade; it affords occupation and infinite variety; it demands no bodily strength; it can be pursued in retirement; it ap-

* Vide Preface to Darwin's Botanic Garden.

plies immediately to useful and domestic purposes; and whilst the ingenuity of the most inventive mind may in this science be exercised, there is no danger of inflaming the imagination, because the mind is intent upon realities, the knowledge that is acquired is exact, and the pleasure of the pursuit is a sufficient reward for the labour.

A clear and ready knowledge of arithmetic is surely no useless acquirement for those who are to regulate the expenses of a family. Economy is not the mean "penny wise and pound foolish" policy which some suppose it to be; it is the art of calculation joined to the habit of order, and the power of proportioning our wishes to the means of gratifying them. The little pilfering temper of a wife is despicable and odious to every man of sense; but there is a judicious graceful species of economy, which has no connexion with an avaricious temper, and which, as it depends upon the understanding, can be expected only from cultivated minds. Women who have been well educated, far from despising domestic duties, will hold them in high respect, because they will see that the whole happiness of life is made up of the happiness of each particular day and hour, and that much of the enjoyment of these must depend upon the punctual practice of those virtues which are more valuable than splendid.

It is not, I hope, your opinion, that ignorance is the best security for female virtue. If this connexion between virtue and ignorance could once be clearly proved, we ought to drown our books deeper than ever plummet sounded:—I say *we*—for the danger extends equally to both sexes, unless you assert that the duties of men rest upon a more certain foundation than the duties of the other sex: if our virtues can be demonstrated to be advantageous, why should their's suffer for being exposed to the light of reason?—All social virtue conduces to our own happiness or that of our fellow-creatures; can it weaken the sense of duty to illustrate this truth?—Having once pointed out to the understanding of a sensible woman the necessary connexion between her virtues and her happiness, must not those virtues, and the means of preserving them, become in her eyes objects of the most interesting importance? But you fear, that even if their conduct continued to be irreproachable, the manners of women might be rendered less delicate by the increase of their knowledge;—you dislike in the female sex, that daring spirit which despises the common forms of society, and which breaks through the reserve and delicacy of female manners:—so do I:—and the best method to make my pupil respect these things, is to shew her how they are indispensably connected with the largest interests of society: surely this perception of the utility of forms, apparently trifling, must be a strong security to the

prudential reserve of the sex, and far superior to the automatic habits of those who submit to the conventions of the world without consideration, or conviction. Habit, confirmed by reason, assumes the rank of virtue. The motives that restrain from vice, must be increased by the clear conviction, that vice and wretchedness are inseparably united.

Do not however imagine, my dear Sir, that I shall attempt to lay moral demonstration before *a child*, who could not possibly comprehend my meaning; do not imagine, that because I intend to cultivate my daughter's understanding, I shall neglect to give her those early habits of reserve and modesty which constitute the female character.—Believing, as I do, that woman, as well as man, may be called a bundle of habits, I shall be peculiarly careful, during my child's early education, to give her as many good habits as possible; by degrees as her understanding, that is to say, as her knowledge and power of reasoning shall increase, I can explain the advantages of these habits, and confirm their power by the voice of reason. I lose no time, I expose myself to no danger by this system. On the contrary, those who depend entirely upon the force of custom and prejudice, expose themselves to infinite danger. If once their pupils begin to reflect upon their own hoodwinked education, they will probably suspect, that they have been deceived in all that they have been taught, and they will burst their bonds with indignation.—Credulity is always rash in the moment; she detects the impositions that have been practised upon her easy temper. In this inquiring age, few have any chance of passing through life without being excited to examine the motives and principles from which they act: is it not, therefore, prudent to cultivate the reasoning faculty, by which alone this examination can be made with safety? A false argument, a repartee, the charms of wit or eloquence, the voice of fashion, of folly, of numbers, might, if she had no substantial reasons to support her cause, put virtue not only out of countenance but out of humour.

You speak of moral instinct. As far as I understand the term, it implies certain habits early acquired from education; to these I would add the power of reasoning, and then, and not till then, I should think myself safe:—for I have observed that the pupils of habit are utterly confounded when they are placed in circumstances different from those to which they have been accustomed.—It has been remarked by travellers and naturalists, that animals, notwithstanding their boasted instinctive knowledge, sometimes make strange and fatal mistakes in their conduct, when they are placed in new situations: destitute of the reasoning faculty, and deceived by resemblances, they mistake poison for food. Thus the bullfrog will swallow burning charcoal, mistaking it for fire flies,

and the European hogs and poultry who travelled to Surinam, poisoned themselves by eating plants that were unknown to them.*

You seem, my dear Sir, to be afraid that truth should not keep so firm a hold upon the mind as prejudice; and you produce an allusion to justify your fears. You tell us, that civil society is like a building, and you warn me not to tear down the ivy which clings to the walls, and braces the loose stones together.—I believe that ivy, in some situations, tends to pull down the walls to which it clings.——You think it is not worth while to cultivate the understandings of women, because you say that you have no security that the conviction of their reason will have any permanent good effect upon their conduct; and to persuade me of this, you bid me observe, that men who are superior to women in strength of mind and judgment, are frequently misled by their passions.—By this mode of argument, you may conclude that reason is totally useless to the whole human race; but you cannot, with any show of justice, infer that it ought to be monopolized by one-half of mankind. But why should you quarrel with reason because passion sometimes conquers her?—You should endeavour to strengthen the connexion between theory and practice, if it be not sufficiently strong already; but you can gain nothing by destroying theory.—Happiness is your aim,—but your unpractised or unsteady hand does not obey your will:—you do not at the first trial hit the mark precisely.—Would you, because you are awkward, insist upon being blind?

The strength of mind which enables people to govern themselves by their reason, is not always connected with abilities even in their most cultivated state: I deplore the instances which I have seen of this truth; but I do not despair; on the contrary, I am excited to inquire into the causes of this phenomenon; nor, because I see some evil, would I sacrifice the good upon a bare motive of suspicion. It is a contradiction to say that giving the power to discern what is good, is giving a disposition to prefer what is bad. I acknowledge with regret that women who have been but half instructed, who have seen only superficially the relations of moral and political ideas, who have obtained but an imperfect knowledge of the human heart, and who have conducted themselves so as to disgrace their talents and their sex: these are conspicuous and melancholy examples, which are cited oftener with malice than with pity. But I appeal to examples amongst our contemporaries, to which every man of literature will immediately advert to prove, that where the female understanding has been

* Vide Stedman's Voyage to Surinam, vol. II.

properly cultivated, women have not only obtained admiration by their useful abilities, but respect by their exemplary conduct.

I apprehend that many of the errors into which women of literature have fallen, may have arisen from an improper choice of books: those who read chiefly works of imagination, receive from them false ideas of life and of the human heart. Many of these productions I shall keep as I would deadly poison from my child; I should rather endeavour to turn her attention to science than to romance, and to give her early that taste for truth and utility, which when once implanted can scarcely be eradicated. There is a wide difference between innocence and ignorance; ignorant women may have minds the most debased and perverted, whilst the most cultivated understanding may be united with the most perfect innocence and simplicity.

Even if literature were of no other use to the fair sex than to supply them with employment, I should think the time dedicated to the cultivation of their minds well bestowed: they are surely better occupied when they are reading or writing than when coquetting or gaming, losing their fortunes or their characters. You despise the writings of women;—you think that they might have made a better use of the pen than to write plays, and poetry, and romances. Considering that the pen was to women a new instrument, I think they have made at least as good a use of it as learned men did of the needle some centuries ago, when they set themselves to determine how many spirits could stand upon its point, and were ready to tear one another to pieces in the discussion of this sublime question. Let the sexes mutually forgive each other their follies, or what is much better, let them combine their talents for their general advantage.——You say that the experiments we have made do not encourage us to proceed, that the increased care and pains which have been of late years bestowed upon female education, have produced no adequate returns; but you in the same breath allow that amongst your contemporaries whom you prudently forbear to mention, there are some instances of great talents applied to useful purposes. Did you expect that the fruits of good cultivation should appear before the seed was sown?—You triumphantly enumerate the disadvantages to which women, from the laws and customs of society, are liable:—they cannot converse freely with men of wit, science, and learning, nor even with the artist, or artificers; they are excluded from academies, public libraries, &c. Even our politeness prevents us, you say, from ever speaking plain truth and sense to the fair sex:—every assistance that foreign or domestic ingenuity can invent to encourage literary studies, is, as you boast,

almost exclusively ours: and after pointing out all these causes for the inferiority of women in knowledge, you ask for a list of the inventions and discoveries of those who, by your own statement of the question, have not been allowed opportunities for observation. With the insulting injustice of an Egyptian task-master, you demand the work, and deny the necessary materials.

I admit, that with respect to the opportunities of acquiring knowledge, institution and manners, are, as you have stated, much in favour of our sex; but your argument concerning *time* appears to me to be unfounded.—Women who do not love dissipation must have more time for the cultivation of their understandings than men can have, if you compute the whole of life:—whilst the knowledge of the learned languages continues to form an indispensable part of a gentleman's education, many years of childhood and youth must be devoted to their attainment.—During these studies, the general cultivation of the understanding is in some degree retarded. All the intellectual powers are cramped, except the memory, which is sufficiently exercised, but which is overloaded with words, and with words that are not always understood.—The genius of living and of dead languages differ so much, that the pains which are taken to write elegant Latin frequently spoil the English style.—Girls usually write much better than boys; they think and express their thoughts clearly at an age when young men can scarcely write an easy letter upon any common occasion. Women do not read the good authors of antiquity as school-books, but they can have excellent translations of most of them when they are capable of tasting the beauties of composition.—I know that it is supposed we cannot judge of the classics by translations, and I am sensible that much of the merit of the originals may be lost; but I think the difference in pleasure is more than overbalanced to women by the *time* that is saved, and by the labour and misapplication of abilities which is spared. If they do not acquire a classical taste, neither do they imbibe classic prejudices, nor are they early disgusted with literature by pedagogues, lexicons, grammars, and all the melancholy apparatus of learning.—Women begin to taste the pleasures of reading, and the best authors in the English language are their amusement just at the age when young men, disgusted by their studies, begin to be ashamed of alluding to literature amongst their companions. Travelling, lounging, field sports, gaming, and what is called pleasure in various shapes, usually fill the interval between quitting the university and settling for life.—When this period is past, business, the necessity of pursuing a profession, the ambition to shine in parliament, or to rise in public life, occupy a large portion of their lives.—In many professions the

understanding is but partially cultivated; and general literature must be neglected by those who are occupied in earning bread or amassing riches for their family:—men of genius are often heard to complain, that in the pursuit of a profession they are obliged to contract their inquiries and concentrate their powers.—Statesmen lament that they must often pursue the *expedient* even when they discern that it is not *the right*; and men of letters who earn their bread by their writings, inveigh bitterly against the tyranny of booksellers who degrade them to the state of "literary artisans."—"Literary artisans" is the comprehensive term under which a celebrated philosopher* classes all those who cultivate only particular talents or powers of the mind, and who suffer their other faculties to lose all strength and vigour for want of exercise. The other sex have no such constraint upon their understandings; neither the necessity of earning their bread, nor the ambition to shine in public affairs, hurry or prejudice their minds: in domestic life they have leisure to be wise.

Far from being ashamed that so little has been done by female abilities in science and useful literature, I am surprized that so much has been effected. On natural history, on criticism, on moral philosophy, on education, they have written with elegance, eloquence, precision and ingenuity. Your complaint that women do not turn their attention to useful literature, is surely ill timed: if they merely increased the number of books in circulation, you might declaim against them with success; but when they add to the general fund of useful and entertaining knowledge, you cannot with any show of justice prohibit their labours: there can be no danger that the market should ever be overstocked with produce of intrinsic worth.

The despotic monarchs of Spain forbid the exploring of any new gold or silver mines without the express permission of government, and they have ordered several rich ones to be shut up as not equal to the cost of working. There is some *appearance* of reason for this exertion of power; it may prevent the world from being encumbered by nominal wealth.—But the Dutch merchants, who burn whole cargoes of spice lest they should lower the price of the commodity in which they deal, show a mean spirit of monopoly which can plead no plausible excuse.—I hope you feel nothing like a disposition to Spanish despotism or Dutch jealousy, when you would exclude female talents from the literary market.

You observe, that since censure is a tax which every man must pay who aspires to eminence, women must expect to

* Professor Dugald Stewart. History of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.

pay it doubly. Why the tax should not be equally assessed, I am at a loss to conjecture: but in fact it does not fall very heavy upon those who have any portion of philosophy; they may, with *the poet of reason* exclaim

"Though doubly tax'd how little have I lost!"

Your dread of the envy attendant upon literary excellence might with equal justice be extended to every species of merit, and might be urged against all that is good in art or nature. —Scandal is said to attack always the fairest characters, as the birds always peck most at the ripest fruit; but would you for this reason have no fruit ripen, or no characters aspire to excellence?

But if it be your opinion that women are naturally inferior to us in capacity, why do you feel so much apprehension of their becoming eminent, or of their obtaining power, in consequence of the cultivation of their understandings?—These expressions of scorn and jealousy neutralize each other. If your contempt were unmixed and genuine, it would be cool and tranquil, inclining rather to pity than to anger.

You say that in all animals the female is the inferior, and you have never seen any reason to believe that the human species affords an exception to this observation.—Superiority amongst brutes depends upon force; superiority amongst the human species depends upon reason: that men are naturally stronger than women, is evident; but strength of mind has no necessary connexion with strength of body; and intellectual ability has ever conquered mere physical force, from the times of Ajax and Ulysses to the present day. In civilized nations, that species of superiority which belongs to force, is much reduced in value amongst the higher classes of society. —The Baron who struck his sword into an oak, and defied any one to pull out the weapon, would not in these days fill the hearts of his antagonists with terror, nor would the twisting of a horse shoe be deemed a feat worthy to decide a nation in their choice of a king.—The days of chivalry are no more; the knight no longer sallies forth in ponderous armour, mounted upon "a steed as invulnerable as himself."*—The damsel no longer depends upon the prowess of his mighty arm to maintain the glory of her charms, or the purity of her fame; grim barons, and castles guarded by monsters and all devouring dragons, are no more; and from being the champions and masters of the fair sex, we are now become their friends and companions. We have not surely been losers by this change; the fading glories of romance have vanished, but the real permanent pleasures of domestic life remain in their

* Condorcet.—History of the Progress of the Human Mind.

stead; and what the fair have lost of adulation they have gained in friendship.

Do not, my dear Sir, call me a champion for the rights of woman; I am too much their friend to be their partizan, and I am more anxious for their happiness than intent upon a metaphysical discussion of their rights: their happiness is so nearly connected with ours, that it seems to me absurd to manage any argument so as to set the two sexes at variance by vain contention for superiority. It ought not to be our object to make an invidious division of privileges, or an ostentatious declaration of rights, but to determine what is most for our general advantage.

You fear that the minds of women should be enlarged and cultivated, lest their power in society and their liberty should consequently increase. Observe that the word *liberty*, applied to the female sex, conveys alarming ideas to our minds, because we do not stay to define the term; we have a confused notion, that it implies want of reserve, want of delicacy, boldness of manners, or of conduct; in short, liberty to do wrong.—Surely this is a species of liberty, which knowledge can never make desirable. Those who understand the real interests of society, who clearly see the connexion between virtue and happiness, must know that *the liberty to do wrong*, is synonymous with *the liberty to make themselves miserable.* This is a privilege, of which none would chuse to avail themselves. When reason defines the term, there is no danger of its being misunderstood; but imagination and false associations often make this word liberty, in its perverted sense, sound delightful to those who have been kept in ignorance and slavery. Girls who have been disciplined under the strict high hand of authority, are apt to fancy, that to escape from habitual restraint, to exercise their own will, no matter how, is to be free and to be happy.—Hence, innumerable errors in their conduct; hence their mistaken notions of liberty, and that inordinate ambition to acquire power, which ignorant, ill-educated women show in every petty struggle, where they are permitted to act in private life. You believe this temper to be inherent in the sex; and a man who has just published a book upon the Spanish bull-fights, declares his belief that the passion for bull-fighting, is innate in the breast of every Spaniard.—Do not, my friend, assign two causes for an effect where one is obviously adequate. The disposition to love command, need not be attributed to any innate cause in the minds of females, whilst it may be fairly ascribed to their erroneous education.

I shall early cultivate my daughter's judgment, to prevent her from being wilful or positive; I shall leave her to chuse for herself in all those trifles upon which the happiness of

childhood depends; and I shall gradually teach her to reflect upon the consequences of her actions, to compare and judge of her feelings, and to compute the morn and evening to her day.——I shall thus, I hope, induce her to reason upon all subjects, even upon matters of taste, where many women think it sufficient to say—I admire; or, I detest:—Oh charming! or, Oh horrible!——People who have reasons for their preferences and aversions, are never so provokingly zealous in the support of their own tastes, as those usually are who have no arguments to convince themselves or others that they are in the right.

But you are apprehensive that the desire to govern, which women show in domestic life, should obtain a larger field to display itself in public affairs.—It seems to me impossible, that they can ever acquire the species of direct power which you dread; their influence must be private: it is therefore of the utmost consequence that it should be judicious.—It was not Themistocles, but his wife and child who governed the Athenians; it was therefore of some consequence that the boy who governed the mother, who governed her husband, should not be a spoiled child, and consequently that the mother who educated this child should be a reasonable woman. Thus are human affairs chained together; and female influence is a necessary and important link, which you cannot break without destroying the whole.

If it be your object, my dear Sir, to monopolize power for our sex, you cannot possibly secure it better from the wishes of the other, than by enlightening their minds and enlarging their views: they will then be convinced, not by the voice of the moralist, who puts us to sleep whilst he persuades us of the vanity of all sublunary enjoyments; but by their own awakened observation: they will be convinced, that power is generally an evil to its possessor; that to those, who really wish for the good of their fellow-creatures, it is at best but a painful trust.—The mad philosopher in Rasselas, who imagined that he regulated the weather and distributed the seasons, could never enjoy a moment's repose, lest he should not make "to the different nations of the earth, an impartial dividend of rain and sun-shine."—Those who are entrusted with the government of nations, must, if they have an acute sense of justice experience something like the anxiety felt by this unfortunate monarch of the clouds.

Lord Kenyon has lately decided, that a woman may be *an overseer of a parish;* but you are not, I suppose, apprehensive that many ladies of cultivated understanding should become ambitious of this honour.—One step farther in reasoning, and a woman would desire as little to be a queen or an empress, as to be the overseer of a parish.—You may perhaps reply,

that men, even those of the greatest understanding, have been ambitious, and fond even to excess of power: that ambition is the glorious fault of heroes, I allow; but heroes are not always men of the most enlarged understandings—they are possessed by the spirit of military adventure—an infectious spirit, which men catch from one another in the course of their education:—to this contagion the fair sex are not exposed.

At all events, if you suppose that women are likely to acquire influence in the state, it is prudent to enlighten their understandings, that they may not make an absurd or pernicious use of their power. You appeal to history, to prove that great calamities have ensued whenever the female sex has obtained power; yet you acknowledge that we cannot with certainty determine, whether these evils have been the effects of our trusting them with liberty, or of our neglecting previously to instruct them in the use of it:—upon the decision of this question rests your whole argument. In a most awful tone of declamation, you bid me follow the history of female nature, from the court of Augustus to that of Lewis the XIVth. and tell you whether I can hesitate to acknowledge, that the liberty and influence of women have always been the greatest during the decline of empires.—But you have not proved to me that women had more knowledge, that they were better educated at the court of Augustus, or during the reign of Lewis XIVth. than at any other place, or during any other period of the world; therefore your argument gains nothing by the admission of your assertions; and unless I could trace the history of female education, it is vain for me to follow what you call the history of female nature.

It is, however, remarkable, that the means by which the sex have hitherto obtained that species of power which they have abused, have arisen chiefly from their personal, and not from their mental qualifications, from their skill in the arts of persuasion, and from their accomplishments; not from their superior powers of reasoning, or from the cultivation of their understanding. The most refined species of coquetry can undoubtedly be practised in the highest perfection by women, who to personal graces unite all the fascination of wit and eloquence. There is infinite danger in permitting such women to obtain power without having acquired habits of reasoning. Rousseau admires these syrens; but the system of Rousseau, pursued to its fullest extent, would overturn the world, would make every woman a Cleopatra, and every man an Anthony; —it would destroy all domestic virtue, all domestic happiness, all the pleasures of truth and love.——In the midst of that delirium of passion to which Anthony gave the name of love, what must have been the state of his degraded, wretched soul, when he could suspect his mistress of designs upon his

life?—To cure him of these suspicions, she, at a banquet, poisoned the flowers of his garland, waited till she saw him inflamed with wine, then persuaded him to break the tops of his flowers into his goblet, and just stopped him when the cup was at his lips, exclaiming—"Those flowers are poisoned: you see that I do not want the means of destroying you, if you were become tiresome to me, or if I could live without you."——And this is the happy pair who instituted the orders of—*The inimitable lovers!—and the companions in death!**

These are the circumstances, which should early be pointed out, to both sexes, with all the energy of truth: let them learn, that the most exquisite arts of the most consummate coquette could not obtain the confidence of him who sacrificed to her charms the empire of the world.—It is from the experience of the past that we must form our judgment of the future.—How unjustly you accuse me of desiring to destroy the memory of past experiments, the wisdom collected by the labour of ages—*You* would prohibit this treasure of knowledge to one half of the human species; and *I* on the contrary would lay it open to all my fellow-creatures.—I speak as if it were actually in our option to retard or to accelerate the intellectual progress of the sex; but in fact it is absolutely out of our power to drive the fair sex back to their former state of darkness;—the art of printing has totally changed their situation; their eyes are opened,—the classic page is unrolled, they *will* read;—all we can do, is to induce them to read with judgment—to enlarge their minds so that they may take a full view of their interests and of ours.—I have no fear, that the truth upon any subject, should injure my daughter's mind; it is falsehood that I dread:—I dread, that she should acquire preposterous notions of love, of happiness, from the furtive perusal of vulgar novels, or from the clandestine conversation of ignorant waiting maids:—I dread, that she should acquire, even from the enchanting eloquence of Rousseau, the fatal idea, that cunning and address are the natural resources of her sex; that coquetry is necessary to attract, and dissimulation to preserve, the heart of man.——I would not, however, proscribe an author, because I believe some of his opinions to be false; I would have my daughter read and compare various books, and correct her judgment of books by listening to the conversation of persons of sense and experience.—Women may learn much of what is essential to their happiness, from the unprejudiced testimony of a father or a brother; they may learn to distinguish the pictures of real life, from paintings of imaginary manners and passions which never

* Vide Plutarch.

had, which never can have, any existence.—They may learn that it is not the reserve of hypocrisy, the affected demeanour either of a prude or a coquette, that we admire; but it is the simple, graceful, natural modesty of a woman, whose mind is innocent.—With this belief impressed upon her heart, do you think, my dear friend, that she who can reflect and reason, would take the means to disgust where she wishes to please; or that she would incur contempt, when she knows how to secure esteem?——Do you think that she will employ artifice to entangle some heedless heart, when she knows that every heart which can be so won is not worth the winning?—She will not look upon our sex either as dupes or tyrants; she will be aware of the important difference between evanescent passion, and that affection founded upon mutual esteem, which forms the permanent happiness of life.

I am not apprehensive, my dear Sir, that Cupid should be scared by the helmet of Minerva; he has conquered his idle fears, and has been familiarized to Minerva and the Muses.

> "And now of power his darts are found,
> Twice ten thousand times to wound."*

That the power of beauty over the human heart is infinitely increased by the associated ideas of virtue and intellectual excellence, has been long acknowledged.—A set of features, however regular, inspire but little admiration or enthusiasm, unless they be irradiated by that sun-shine of the soul which creates beauty. The expression of intelligent benevolence renders even homely features and cheeks of sorry grain† agreeable; and it has been observed, that the most lasting attachments have not always been excited by the most beautiful of the sex. As men have become more cultivated, they have attended more to the expression of amiable and estimable qualities in the female countenance; and in all probability the taste for this species of beauty will increase amongst the good and wise. When agreeable qualities are connected with the view of any particular form, we learn to love that form, though it may have no other merit. Women who have no pretensions to Grecian beauty may, if their countenances are expressive of good temper and good sense, have some chance of pleasing men of cultivated minds.—In an excellent Review‡ of Gillier's Essay on the Causes of the Perfection of Antique Sculpture, which I have just seen, it is observed, that our exclusive admiration of the physiognomy of the Greeks

* See the introduction of Cupid to the Muses and Minerva, in a charming poem of Mrs. Barbauld's—"*The origin of song-writing.*"—Would it not afford a beautiful subject for a picture?

† Milton.

‡ Appendix to Monthly Review, from January to April 1798, page 516.

arises from prejudice, since the Grecian countenance cannot be necessarily associated with any of the perfections which now distinguish accomplished or excellent men. This remark in a popular periodical work shews that the public mind is not bigotted in matters of taste, and that the standard is no longer supposed to be fixed by the voice of ancient authority. The changes that are made, in the opinions of our sex as to female beauty, according to the different situations in which women are placed, and the different qualities on which we fix the idea of their excellence, are curious and striking.—Ask a northern Indian, says a traveller who has lately visited them —ask a northern Indian what is beauty, and he will answer, a broad flat face, small eyes, high cheek bones, three or four broad black lines across each cheek, a low forehead, a large broad chin, a clumsy hook nose, &c. These beauties are greatly heightened, or at least rendered more valuable, when the possessor is capable of dressing all kinds of skins, converting them into the different parts of their clothing, and able to carry eight or ten stone in summer, or haul a much greater weight in winter.—Prince Matanabbee, adds this author, prided himself much upon the height and strength of his wives, and would frequently say, few women could carry or haul heavier loads. If some years ago, you had asked a Frenchman what he meant by beauty, he would have talked to you of *l'air piquant*, *l'air spirituel*, *l'air noble*, *l'air comme il faut*, and he would have referred ultimately to that *je ne scais quoi*, for which Parisian belles were formerly celebrated.—French women mixed much in company, the charms of what they called *Esprit* were admired in conversation, and the *petit minios* denoting lively wit and coquetry became fashionable in France, whilst gallantry and a taste for the pleasures of *society* prevailed. The countenance expressive of sober sense and modest reserve continue to be the taste of the English, who wisely prefer the pleasures of domestic life.—Domestic life should, however, be enlivened and embellished with all the wit and vivacity, and politeness for which French women were once admired, without admitting any of their vices or follies.—The more men of literature and polished manners desire to spend their time in their own families, the more they must wish that their wives and daughters may have tastes and habits similar to their own. If they can meet with conversation suited to their taste at home, they will not be driven to clubs for companions; they will invite the men of wit and science of their acquaintance to their own houses, instead of appointing some place of meeting from which ladies are to be excluded. This mixture of the talents, and knowledge of both sexes, must be advantageous to the interests of society, by increasing domestic happiness.—Private *virtues* are public

benefits: if each bee were content in his cell, there could be no grumbling hive, and if each cell were complete, the whole fabric must be perfect.

When you asserted, my dear Sir, that learned men usually prefer for their wives, women rather below than above the standard of mental mediocrity, you forgot many instances strongly in contradiction of this opinion.—Since I began this letter, I met with the following pathetic passage, which I cannot forbear transcribing.

"The greatest part of the observations contained in the foregoing pages were derived from a lady, who is now beyond the reach of being affected by any thing in this sublunary world. Her beneficence of disposition induced her never to overlook any fact or circumstance that fell within the sphere of her observation, which promised to be in any respect beneficial to her fellow-creatures. To her gentle influence the public are indebted, if they be indeed indebted at all, for whatever useful hints may at any time have dropt from my pen. A being, she thought, who must depend so much as man does on the assistance of others, owes, as a debt to his fellow-creatures, the communication of the little useful knowledge that chance may have thrown in his way. Such has been my constant aim; such were the views of the wife of my bosom, the friend of my heart, who supported and assisted me in all my pursuits.—I now feel a melancholy satisfaction in contemplating those objects she once delighted to elucidate."*

Dr. Gregory, Haller, and Lord Littleton, have, in the language of affection, poetry, and truth, described the pleasures which men of science and literature enjoy in an union with women, who can sympathize in all their thoughts and feelings, who can converse with them as equals, and live with them as friends; who can assist them in the important and delightful duty of educating their children; who can make their family their most agreeable society, and their home the attractive centre of happiness.

Can women of uncultivated understandings make such wives or such mothers?

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* J. Anderson.—Essay on the Management of a Dairy.

LETTERS

OF

JULIA AND CAROLINE.

No penance can absolve their guilty fame,
Nor tears, that wash out guilt, can wash out shame.

PRIOR.

LETTER I.

JULIA TO CAROLINE.

In vain, dear Caroline, you urge me to *think;* I profess only to *feel.*

"*Reflect upon my own feelings!* Analyze my notions of happiness! explain to you my system!"—My system! But I have no system: *that* is the very difference between us. My notions of happiness cannot be resolved into simple, fixed, principles. Nor dare I even attempt to analyze them; the subtle essence would escape in the process: just punishment to the alchemist in morality!

You, Caroline, are of a more sedate, contemplative character. Philosophy becomes the rigid mistress of your life, enchanting enthusiasm the companion of mine. Suppose she lead me now and then in pursuit of a meteor; am not I happy in the chase? When one illusion vanishes, another shall appear, and still leading me forward towards an horizon that retreats as I advance, the happy prospect of futurity shall vanish only with my existence.

"Reflect upon my feelings!"—Dear Caroline, is it not enough that I do feel?—All that I dread is that *apathy* which philosophers call tranquillity. You tell me that by continually *indulging* I shall weaken my natural sensibility;—are not all

the faculties of the soul improved, refined by exercise, and why shall *this* be excepted from the general law?

But I must not, you tell me, indulge my taste for romance and poetry, lest I waste that sympathy on *fiction* which *reality* so much better deserves. My dear friend, let us cherish the precious propensity to pity! no matter what the object; sympathy with fiction or reality, arises from the same disposition.

When the sigh of compassion rises in my bosom, when the spontaneous tear starts from my eye, what frigid moralist shall "stop the genial current of the soul;" shall say to the tide of passion, *so far shalt thou go, and no farther?*—Shall man presume to circumscribe that which Providence has left unbounded?

But, Oh Caroline! if our feelings as well as our days are numbered; if by the immutable law of nature, apathy be the sleep of passion, and languor the necessary consequence of exertion; if indeed the pleasures of life are so ill proportioned to its duration, oh may that duration be shortened to me!—Kind heaven, let not my soul die before my body!

Yes, if at this instant my guardian genius were to appear before me, and offering me the choice of my future destiny; on the one hand, the even temper, the poised judgment, the stoical serenity of philosophy; on the other, the eager genius, the exqusite sensibility of enthusiasm:—If the genius said to me "chuse:"—The lot of the one is great pleasure, and great pain—great virtues, and great defects—ardent hope and severe disappointment—extacy and despair:—the lot of the other is calm happiness unmixt with violent grief, virtue without heroism, respect without admiration, and a length of life, in which to every moment is allotted its proper portion of felicity:—Gracious genius, I should exclaim, if half my existence must be the sacrifice, take it; *enthusiasm is my choice.*

Such, my dear friend, would be my choice were I a man; as a woman, how much more readily should I determine!

What has woman to do with philosophy? The graces flourish not under her empire; a woman's part in life is to please, and Previdence has assigned to her *success* all the pride and pleasure of her being.

Then leave us our weakness, leave us our follies; they are our best arms.

> "Leave us to trifle with more grace and ease,
> Whom folly pleases and whose follies please."

The moment grave sense, and solid merit appear, adieu the bewitching caprice, the "*lively nonsense,*" the exquisite, yet childish susceptibility which charms, interests, captivates.—Belive me, our *amiable defects* win more than our noblest virtues. Love requires sympathy, and sympathy is seldom con-

nected with a sense of superiority. I envy none their "*painful pre-eminence.*" Alas! whether it be deformity or excellence which makes us say with Richard the Third,

"I am myself alone!"——

it comes to much the same thing. Then let us, Caroline, content ourselves to gain in love what we lose in esteem.

Man is to be held only by the *slightest* chains; with the idea that he can break them at pleasure, he submits to them in sport; but his pride revolts against the power to which his *reason* tells him he ought to submit. What then can woman gain by reason? Can she prove by argument that she is amiable? or demonstrate that she is an angel?

Vain was the industry of the artist, who, to produce the image of perfect beauty, selected from the fairest faces their most faultless features. Equally vain must be the efforts of the philosopher, who would excite the idea of mental perfection, by combining an assemblage of party-coloured virtues.

Such, I had almost said, is my *system*, but I mean my *sentiments*. I am not accurate enough to compose a *system*. After all, how vain are systems! and theories and reasonings!

We may *declaim*, but what do we really know? All is uncertainty—Human prudence does nothing—Fortune every thing: I leave every thing therefore to fortune; *you* leave nothing. Such is the difference between us,—and which shall be the happiest, time alone can decide.

Farewell, dear Caroline; I love you better than I thought I could love a philosopher.

Your ever affectionate,
JULIA.

LETTER II.

CAROLINE'S ANSWER TO JULIA.

At the hazard of ceasing to be "*charming*," "*interesting*," "*captivating*," I must, dear Julia, venture to reason with you, to examine your favourite doctrine of "*amiable defects*," and if possible to dissipate that unjust dread of perfection which you seem to have continually before your eyes.

It is the sole object of a woman's life, you say, to *please*. Her amiable defects *please* more than her noblest virtues, her follies more than her wisdom, her caprice more than her tem-

per, and *something*, a nameless something, which no art can imitate and no science can teach, more than all.

Art, you say, spoils the graces and corrupts the heart of woman; and at best can produce only a cold model of perfection; which, though perhaps strictly conformable to *rule*, can never touch the soul, or please the unprejudiced taste, like one simple stroke of genuine nature.

I have often observed, dear Julia, that an inaccurate use of words produces such a strange confusion in all reasoning, that in the heat of debate, the combatants, unable to distinguish their friends from their foes, fall promiscuously on both. A skilful disputant knows well how to take advantage of this confusion, and sometimes endeavours to create it. I do not know whether I am to suspect you of such a design; but I must guard against it.

You have with great address availed yourself of the *two* ideas connected with the word *art;* first as opposed to simplicity it implies artifice, and next as opposed to ignorance, it comprehends all the improvements of science, which, leading us to search for general causes, rewards us with a dominion over their dependent effects:—that which instructs how to pursue the objects which we may have in view, with the greatest probability of success. All men who act from general principles are so far philosophers. Their objects may be, when attained, insufficient to their happiness, or they may not previously have known all the necessary means to obtain them: but they must not therefore complain, if they do not meet with success, which they have no reason to expect.

Parrhasius, in collecting the most admired excellences from various models, to produce perfection, concluded from general principles that mankind would be pleased again with what had once excited their admiration.—So far he was a philosopher: but he was disappointed of success:—Yes, for he was ignorant of the cause necessary to produce it. The separate features might be perfect, but they were unsuited to each other, and in their forced union he could not give to the whole countenance, symmetry, and an appropriate expression.

There was, as you say, a *something* wanting, which his science had not taught him. He should then have set himself to examine what that *something* was, and how it was to be obtained. His want of success arose from the *insufficiency*, not the *fallacy* of theory. Your object, dear Julia, we will suppose is "to please." If general observation and experience have taught you that slight accomplishments, and a trivial character, succeed more certainly in obtaining this end, than higher worth, and sense, you act from principle in rejecting the one and aiming at the other. You have discovered, or think you have discovered, the secret causes which produce

the desired effect, and you employ them. Do not call this *instinct* or *nature;* this also, though you scorn it, is *philosophy.*

But when you come soberly to reflect, you have a feeling in your mind that reason and cool judgment disapprove of the part you are acting.

Let us however distinguish between disapprobation of the *object*, and the means.

Averse as enthusiasm is to the retrograde motion of analysis, let me, my dear friend, lead you one step backward.

Why do you wish to please? I except at present from the question, the desire to please, arising from a passion which requires a reciprocal return. Confined as *this* wish must be in a woman's heart to one object alone, when you say, Julia, *that the admiration of others* will be absolutely necessary to your happiness, I must suppose you mean to express only a *general* desire to please?

Then under this limitation—let me ask you again, why do you wish to please?

Do not let a word stop you. The word *vanity* conveys to us a disagreeable idea. There seems something *selfish* in the sentiment.—That all the pleasure we feel in pleasing others, arises from the gratification it affords to our own *vanity.*

We refine, and explain, and never can bring ourselves fairly to make a confession, which we are sensible must lower us in the opinion of others, and consequently mortify the very *vanity* we would conceal. So strangely then do we deceive ourselves as to deny the existence of a motive, which at the instant prompts the denial. But let us, dear Julia, exchange the word *vanity* for a less odious word, self-complacency; let us acknowledge that we wish to please, because the success raises our self-complacency. If you ask why raising our self-approbation gives us pleasure, I must answer, that I do not know. Yet I see and feel that it does; I observe that the voice of numbers is capable of raising the highest transport or the most fatal despair. The eye of man seems to possess a fascinating power over his fellow-creatures, to raise the blush of shame, or the glow of pride.

I look around me and I see riches, titles, dignities pursued with such eagerness by thousands, only as the signs of distinction. Nay, are not all these things sacrificed the moment they cease to be distinctions. The moment the prize of glory is to be won by other means, do not millions sacrifice their fortunes, their peace, their health, their lives, for *fame.* Then amongst the highest pleasures of human beings, I must place self-approbation. With this belief, let us endeavour to secure it in the greatest extent, and to the longest duration.

Then Julia, the wish to please becomes only a secondary motive subordinate to the desire I have to secure my own self-complacency. We will examine how far they are connected.

In reflecting upon my own mind, I observe that I am flattered by the opinion of others, in proportion to the opinion I have previously formed of their judgment; or, I perceive that the opinion of numbers, merely as numbers, has power to give me great pleasure or great pain. I would unite both these pleasures if I could, but in general I cannot—they are incompatible. The opinion of the vulgar crowd and the enlightened individual, the applause of the highest and the lowest of mankind, cannot be obtained by the same means.

Another question then arises, whom shall we wish to please?—We must choose, and be decided in the choice.

You say that you are proud; I am prouder.—You will be content with indiscriminate admiration—nothing will content me but what is *select*. As long as I have the use of my reason—as long as my heart can feel the delightful sense of a "well-earned praise," I will fix my eye on the highest pitch of excellence, and steadily endeavour to attain it.

Conscious of her worth, and daring to assert it, I would have a woman early in life, know that she is capable of filling the heart of a man of sense and merit; that she is worthy to be his companion and friend. With all the energy of her soul, with all the powers of her understanding, I would have a woman endeavour to please those whom she esteems and loves.

She runs a risk, you will say, of never meeting her equal.—Hearts and understandings of a superior order are seldom met with in the world; or when met with, it may not be her particular good fortune to win them.—True; but if ever she *wins*, she will *keep* them; and the prize appears to me well worth the pains and difficulty of attaining.

I, Julia, admire and feel enthusiasm; but I would have philosophy directed to the highest objects. I dread apathy, as much as you can, and I would endeavour to prevent it, not by sacrificing half my existence, but by enjoying the whole with moderation.

You ask why exercise does not increase sensibility, and why sympathy with imaginary distress will not also increase the disposition to sympathize with what is real?—Because pity should, I think, always be associated with the active desire to relieve. If it be suffered to become a *passive sensation*, it is a *useless weakness*, not a virtue. The species of reading you speak of must be hurtful, even in this respect, to the mind, as it indulges all the luxury of woe in sympathy with fictitious distress, without requiring the exertion which reality demands: besides, universal experience proves to us that habit,

so far from increasing sensibility, absolutely destroys it, by familiarizing it with objects of compassion.

Let me, my dear friend, appeal even to your own experience in the very instance you mention. Is there any pathetic writer in the world, who could move you as much at the "twentieth reading, as at the first."* Speak naturally, and at the third or fourth reading, you would probably say, it is very pathetic, but I have read it before—I liked it better the first time; that is to say, it *did* touch me once—I know it *ought* to touch me now, but it *does not*:—beware of this!—Do not let life become *as tedious as a twice-told tale.*

Farewell, dear Julia; this is the answer of fact against eloquence; philosophy against enthusiasm. You appeal from my understanding to my heart—I appeal from the heart to the understanding of my judge; and ten years hence the decision perhaps will be in my favour.

Yours sincerely,
CAROLINE.

LETTER III.

CAROLINE TO JULIA, ON HER INTENDED MARRIAGE.

INDEED, my dear Julia, I hardly know how to venture to give you my advice upon a subject, which ought to depend so much upon your own taste and feelings. My opinion and my wishes I could readily tell you: the idea of seeing you united and attached to my brother, is certainly the most agreeable to me; but I am to divest myself of the partiality of a sister, and to consider my brother and Lord V——, as equal candidates for your preference; equal I mean in your regard; for you say that "Your heart is not yet decided in its choice.—If that oracle would declare itself in intelligible terms, you would not hesitate a moment to obey its dictates." But, my dear Julia, is there not another, a *safer*, I do not say a *better* oracle to be consulted? your reason?—Whilst the "doubtful beam still nods from side to side," you may with a steady hand weigh your own motives, and determine what things will be essential to your happiness, and what *price* you will pay for them; for

> "Each pleasure has its *price;* and they who pay
> Too much of pain, but squander life away."

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* Hume said, that Parnel's poems were as fresh at the twentieth reading as at the first.

Do me the justice to believe that I do not quote these lines of Dryden as being the finest poetry he ever wrote; for poets, you know, as Waller wittily observed, never succeed so well in truth, as in fiction.

Since we cannot in life expect to realize all our wishes, we must distinguish those which claim the rank of wants. We must separate the fanciful from the real, or at least make the one subservient to the other.

It is of the utmost importance to you, more particularly, to take every precaution before you decide for life, because disappointment and restraint afterwards would be insupportable to your temper.

You have often declared to me, my dear friend, that your love of poetry, and of all the refinements of literary and romantic pursuits is so intimately "interwoven in your mind, that nothing could separate them, without destroying the whole fabric."

Your tastes, you say, are fixed; if they are so, you must be doubly careful to insure their gratification. If you cannot make *them* subservient to external circumstances, you should certainly, if it be in your power, choose a situation in which circumstances will be subservient to them. If you are convinced that you could not adopt the tastes of another, it will be absolutely necessary for your happiness to live with one whose tastes are similar to your own.

The belief in that sympathy of souls which the poets suppose declares itself between two people at first sight, is perhaps as absurd as the late fashionable belief in animal magnetism: but there is a sympathy which, if it be not the foundation, may be called the cement of affection. Two people could not I should think retain any lasting affection for each other, without a mutual sympathy in taste and in their diurnal occupations, and domestic pleasures. This you will allow, my dear Julia, even in a fuller extent than I do. Now, my brother's tastes, character, and habits of life, are so very different from lord V——'s, that I scarcely know how you can compare them; at least before you can decide which of the two would make you the happiest in life, you must determine what kind of life you may wish to lead; for my brother, though he might make you very happy in domestic life, would not make the Countess of V—— happy; nor would lord V—— make Mrs. Percy happy. They must be two different women, with different habits, and different wishes; so that you must divide yourself, my dear Julia, like Araspes, into two selves; I do not say into a bad and a good self; choose some other epithets to distinguish them, but distinct they must be—so let them now declare and decide their pretensions; and let the victor have not only the honours of a triumph, but all the prerogatives of victory. Let the subdued be subdued for life—Let the victor

take every precaution which policy can dictate, to prevent the possibility of future contests with the vanquished.

But without talking poetry to you, my dear friend, let me seriously recommend it to you to examine your own mind carefully, and if you find that public diversions and public admiration, dissipation, and all the pleasures of riches and high rank, are really and truly essential to your happiness, direct your choice accordingly. Marry lord V——, he has a large fortune, extensive connexions, and an exalted station; his own taste for show and expense, his family pride, and personal vanity, will all tend to the end you propose. Your house, table, equipages, may be all in the highest style of magnificence. Lord V——'s easiness of temper and fondness for you will readily give you that entire ascendency over his pleasures, which your abilities give you over his understanding. He will not control your wishes, you may gratify them to the utmost bounds of his fortune, and perhaps beyond those bounds; you may have entire command at home and abroad. If these are your objects, Julia, take them, they are in your power. But remember, you must take with them their necessary concomitants—the restraints upon your time, upon the choice of your friends and your company, which high life imposes; the *ennui* subsequent to dissipation; the mortifications of rivalship in beauty, wit, rank, and magnificence; the trouble of managing a large fortune, and the chance of involving your affairs and your family in difficulty and distress; these and a thousand more evils you must submit to. You must renounce all the pleasures of the heart and of the imagination; you must give up the idea of cultivating literary taste; you must not expect from your husband friendship and confidence, or any of the delicacies of affection:—you govern him, he cannot therefore be your equal; you may be a fond mother, but you cannot educate your children; you will neither have the time, nor the power to do it; you must trust them to a governess. In the selection of your friends, and in the enjoyment of their company and conversation, you will be still more restrained; in short, you must give up the pleasures of domestic life, for that is not in this case, the life you have chosen. But you will exclaim against me for supposing you capable of making such a choice—such sacrifices! I am sure, *next to my brother*, I am the last person in the world who would wish you to make them.

You have another choice, my dear Julia; domestic life is offered to you, by one who has every wish, and every power to make it agreeable to you: by one whose tastes resemble your own; who would be a judge and a fond admirer of all your perfections. You would have perpetual motives to cultivate every talent, and to exert every power of pleasing for

his sake—for *his* sake, whose penetration no improvement would escape, and whose affection would be susceptible of every proof of yours. Am I drawing too flattering a picture? —A sister's hand may draw a partial likeness, but still it will be a likeness. At all events, my dear Julia, you would be certain of the mode of life you would lead with my brother. The regulation of your time and occupations would be your own. In the education of your family you would meet with no interruptions or restraint. You would have no governess to counteract, no strangers to intrude; you might follow your own judgment, or yield to the judgment of one, who would never require you to submit to his opinion, but to his reason.

All the pleasures of friendship you would enjoy in your own family in the highest perfection, and you would have for your sister the friend of your infancy.

CAROLINE.

LETTER IV.

CAROLINE TO LADY V——, UPON HER INTENDED SEPARATION FROM HER HUSBAND.

You need not fear, my dear lady V——, that I should triumph in the accomplishment of my prophecies; or that I should reproach you for having preferred your own opinion to my advice. Believe me, my dear Julia, I am your friend, nor would the name of sister have increased my friendship.

Five years have made then so great a change in your feelings and views of life, that a few days ago, when my letter to you on your marriage accidentally fell into your hands, "*you were struck with a species of astonishment at your choice, and you burst into tears in an agony of despair, on reading the wretched doom foretold to the wife of Lord V——. A doom,*" you add, "*which I feel hourly accomplishing, and which I see no possibility of averting, but by a separation from a husband, with whom, I now think, it was madness to unite myself.*" Your opinion, I must already know upon this subject, "*as the same arguments which should have prevented me from making such a choice, ought now to determine me to abjure it.*"

You say, dear Julia, that my letter struck you with despair. —Despair is either madness or folly; it obtains, it deserves, nothing from mankind but pity; and pity, though it be akin to love, has yet a secret affinity to contempt. In strong minds, despair is an acute disease; the prelude to great exertion. In

weak minds, it is a chronic distemper, followed by incurable indolence. Let the crisis be favourable, and resume your wonted energy. Instead of suffering the imagination to dwell with unavailing sorrow on the past let us turn our attention towards the future. When an evil is irremediable, let us acknowledge it to be such and bear it:—there is no power to which we submit so certainly, as to necessity. With our hopes, our wishes cease. Imagination has a contracting, as well as an expansive faculty. The prisoner, who, deprived of all that we conceive to constitute the pleasures of life, could interest or occupy himself with the labours of a spider, was certainly a philosopher. He enjoyed all the means of happiness that were left in his power.

I know, my dear lady V——, that words have little effect over grief; and I do not, I assure you, mean to insult you with the parade of stoic philosophy. But consider, your error is not perhaps so great as you imagine. Certainly, they who at the beginning of life, can with a steady eye look through the long perspective of distant years, who can in one view comprise all the different objects of happiness and misery, who can compare accurately, and justly estimate their respective degrees of importance; and who, after having formed such a calculation, are capable of acting uniformly, in consequence of their own conviction, are the *wisest*, and as far as prudence can influence our fortune, the *happiest* of human beings. Next to this favoured class, are those who can perceive, and repair their own errors; who can stop at any given period, to take a new view of life. If unfortunate circumstances have denied you a place in the first rank, you may, dear Julia, secure yourself a station in the second. Is not the conduct of a woman, after her marriage, of infinitely more importance than her previous choice, whatever it may have been? Then now consider what yours should be.

You say, that it is easier to *break* a chain than to *stretch* it; but remember that when broken, your part of the chain, Julia, will still remain with you and fetter and disgrace you through life. Why should a woman be so circumspect in her choice? Is it not because when once made she must abide by it. "She sets her life upon the cast, and she must stand the hazard of the die." From domestic uneasiness a man has a thousand resources; in middling life, the tavern; in high life, the gaming table suspends the anxiety of thought. Dissipation, ambition, business, the occupation of a profession; change of place; change of company, afford him agreeable and honourable relief from domestic chagrin. If his home become tiresome, he leaves it; if his wife become disagreeable to him, he leaves her, and in leaving her loses *only* a wife. But what resource has a woman?—Precluded from all the

occupations common to the other sex, she loses even those peculiar to her own. She has no remedy, from the company of a man she dislikes, but a separation; and this remedy, desperate as it is, is allowed only to a certain class of women in society; to those whose fortune affords them the means of subsistence, and whose friends have secured to them a separate maintenance. A peeress then probably can leave her husband if she wish it; a peasant's wife cannot; she depends upon the character and privileges of a wife for actual subsistence. Her domestic care, if not her affection, is secured to her husband; and it is just that it should. He sacrifices his liberty, his labour, his ingenuity, his time, for the support and protection of his wife; and in proportion to his protection, is his power.

In higher life, where the sacrifices of both parties in the original union are more equal, the evils of a separation are more nearly balanced. But even here, the wife who has hazarded least suffers the most by the dissolution of the partnership; she loses a great part of her fortune, and of the conveniences and luxuries of life. She loses her home, her rank in society. She loses both the repellent and the attractive power of a mistress of a family. "Her occupation is gone." She becomes a wanderer. Whilst her youth and beauty last, she may enjoy that species of delirium, caused by public admiration; fortunate if habit does not destroy the power of this charm, before the season of its duration expire. It was said to be the wish of a celebrated modern beauty, "that she might not survive her nine and twentieth birth-day." I have often heard this wish quoted, for its extravagance; but I always admired it for its good sense. The lady foresaw the inevitable doom of her declining years. Her apprehensions for the future embittered even her enjoyment of the present; and she had resolution enough to offer to take a "bond of fate," to sacrifice one half of her life, to secure the pleasure of the other.

But dear lady V——, probably this wish was made at some distance from the destined period of its accomplishment. On the eve of her nine and twentieth birth-day, the lady perhaps might have felt inclined to retract her prayer. At least we should provide for the cowardice which might seize the female mind at such an instant. Even the most wretched life has power to attach us; none can be more wretched than the old age of a dissipated beauty:—unless, lady V——, it be that of a woman, who, to all her evils has the addition of remorse, for having abjured her duties and abandoned her family. Such is the situation of a woman who separates from her husband. Reduced to go the same insipid round of public amusements, yet more restrained than an unmarried beauty

in youth, yet more miserable in age, the superiority of her genius and the sensibility of her heart, become her greatest evils. She, indeed, must pray for indifference. Avoided by all her family connexions, hated and despised where she might have been loved and respected, solitary in the midst of society, she feels herself deserted at the time of life when she most wants social comfort and assistance.

Dear Julia, whilst it is yet in your power secure to yourself a happier fate; retire to the bosom of your own family; prepare for yourself a new society; perform the duties, and you shall soon enjoy the pleasures of domestic life; educate your children; whilst they are young it shall be your occupation; as they grow up it shall be your glory. Let me anticipate your future success, when they shall appear such as you can make them; when the world shall ask "who educated these amiable young women? Who formed their character? Who cultivated the talents of this promising young man? Why does this whole family live together so perfectly united?" With one voice, dear Julia, your children shall name their mother; she who in the bloom of youth checked herself in the career of dissipation, and turned all the ability and energy of her mind to their education.

Such will be your future fame. In the mean time, before you have formed for yourself companions in your own family, you will want a society suited to your taste. "Disgusted as you have been with frivolous company, you say that you wish to draw around you a society of literary and estimable friends, whose conversation and talents shall delight you, and who at the same time that they are excited to display their own abilities, shall be a judge of yours."

But dear lady V——, the possibility of your forming such a society must depend on your having a home to receive, a character and consequence in life to invite and attach friends. The opinion of numbers is necessary to excite the ambition of individuals. To be a female Mecænas you must have power to confer favours, as well as judgment to discern merit.

What castles in the air are built by the synthetic wand of imagination, which vanish when exposed to the analysis of reason!

Then Julia, supposing that Lord V——, as your husband, becomes a negative quantity, as to your happiness, yet he will acquire another species of value as the master of your family, and the father of your children. As a person who supports your public consequence, and your private self-complacency. Yes, dear lady V——, he will increase your self-complacency; for do you not think, that when your husband sees his children prosper under your care, his family

united under your management—Whilst he feels your merit at home, and hears your praises abroad, do you not think he will himself learn to respect and love you? You say that "*he is not a judge of female excellence; that he has no real taste; that vanity is his ruling passion.*" Then if his judgment be dependent on the opinion of others, he will be the more easily led by the public voice, and you will command the suffrages of the public. If he has not taste enough to approve, he will have vanity enough to be proud of you; and a vain man insensibly begins to love that of which he is proud. Why does lord V—— love his buildings, his paintings, his equipages? It is not for their intrinsic value; but because they are means of distinction to him. Let his wife become a greater distinction to him, and on the same principles he will prefer her. Set an example then, dear lady V——, of domestic virtue; your talents shall make it admired, your rank shall make it conspicuous. You are ambitious, Julia, you love praise; you have been used to it; you cannot live happily without it.

Praise is a mental luxury, which becomes from habit absolutely necessary to our existence; and in purchasing it we must pay the price set upon it by society. The more curious, the more avaricious we become of this "aërial coin," the more it is our interest to preserve its currency and increase its value. You, my dear Julia, in particular, who have amassed so much of it, should not cry down its price, for your own sake!—Do not then say in a fit of disgust, that "you are grown too wise now to value applause."

If, during youth, your appetite for applause was indiscriminate, and indulged to excess, you are now more difficult in your choice, and are become an *epicure* in your *taste* for praise.

Adieu, my dear Julia; I hope still to see you as happy in domestic life, as

Your ever affectionate and sincere friend,

CAROLINE.

LETTER V.

CAROLINE TO LADY V——, ON HER CONDUCT AFTER HER SEPARATION FROM HER HUSBAND.

A DELICACY, of which I now begin to repent, has of late prevented me from writing to you. I am afraid I shall be abrupt, but it is necessary to be explicit. Your conduct, ever since your separation from your husband, has been anxiously watched from a variety of motives, by his family and your own;—it has been blamed. Reflect upon your own mind, and examine with what justice.

Last summer when I was with you I observed a change in your conversation, and the whole turn of your thoughts. I perceived an unusual impatience of restraint; a confusion in your ideas when you began to reason,—an eloquence in your language, when you began to declaim, which convinced me, that from some secret cause the powers of your reason had been declining, and those of your imagination rapidly increasing; the boundaries of right and wrong seemed to be no longer marked in your mind. Neither the rational hope of happiness, nor a sense of duty governed you; but some unknown, wayward power seemed to have taken possession of your understanding, and to have thrown every thing into confusion. You appeared peculiarly averse to philosophy: let me recall your own words to you; you asked "of what use philosophy could be to beings who had no free will, and how the ideas of just punishment and involuntary crime could be reconciled?"

Your understanding involved itself in metaphysical absurdity. In conversing upon literary subjects one evening, in speaking of the striking difference between the conduct and the understanding of the great Lord Bacon, you said, that "it by no means surprised you; that to an enlarged mind, accustomed to consider the universe as one vast *whole*, the conduct of that little animated atom, that inconsiderable part *self*, must be too insignificant to fix or merit attention. It was nothing," you said, "in the general mass of vice and virtue, happiness and misery." I believe I answered, "that it might be *nothing* compared to the great *whole*, but it was *every thing* to the individual." Such were your opinions in theory; you must know enough of the human heart, to perceive their tendency when reduced to practice. Speculative opinions, I know, have little influence over the practice of those who *act*

much and think little; but I should conceive their power to be considerable over the conduct of those who have much time for reflection and little necessity for action. In one case the habit of action governs the thoughts upon any sudden emergency; in the other, the thoughts govern the actions. The truth or falsehood then of speculative opinions is of much greater consequence to our sex than to the other; as we live a life of reflection, they of action.

Retrace then, dear Julia, to your mind the course of your thoughts for some time past: discover the cause of this revolution in your opinions; judge yourself; and remember, that in the *mind* as well as in the body, the highest pitch of disease is often attended with an unconsciousness of its existence. If, then, lady V——, upon receiving my letter, you should feel averse to this self-examination, or if you should imagine it to be useless, I no longer advise, I command you to quit your present abode; come to me; fly from the danger and be safe.

Dear Julia, I must assume this peremptory tone; if you are angry, I must disregard your anger; it is the anger of disease, the anger of one who is roused from that sleep which would end in death.

I respect the equality of friendship; but this equality permits, nay requires the temporary ascendancy I assume. In real friendship the judgment, the genius, the prudence of each party become the common property of both. Even if they are equals they may not be so *always*. Those transient fits of passion, to which the best and wisest are liable, may deprive even the superior of the advantage of their reason. She then has still in her friend, an *impartial*, though perhaps an inferior judgment; each becomes the guardian of the other, as their mutual safety may require.

Heaven seems to have granted this double chance of virtue and happiness, as the peculiar reward of friendship.

Use it then, my dear friend; accept the assistance you could so well return. Obey me; I shall judge of you by your resolution at this crisis; on it depends your fate, and my friendship.

Your sincere, and affectionate

CAROLINE.

LETTER VI.

CAROLINE TO LADY V——, JUST BEFORE SHE WENT TO FRANCE.

JUNE 17TH.

THE time is now come, Lady V——, when I must bid you an eternal adieu. With what deep regret, I need not, Julia, I cannot tell you.

I burned your letter the moment I had read it. Your past confidence I never will betray; but I must renounce all future intercourse with you. I am a sister, a wife, a mother; all these connexions forbid me to be longer your friend. In misfortune, in sickness, or in poverty, I never would have forsaken you; but infamy I cannot share. I would have gone, I went, to the brink of the precipice to save you; with all my force I held you back; but in vain. But why do I vindicate my conduct to you now? Accustomed as I have always been, to think your approbation necessary to my happiness, I forgot that henceforward your opinion is to be nothing to me, or mine to you.

Oh Julia, the idea, the certainty, that you must, if you live, be in a few years, in a few months perhaps, reduced to absolute want—in a foreign country—without a friend—a protector—the fate of women, who have fallen from a state as high as yours—the names of L——, of G——, the horror I feel at joining your name to theirs, impels me to make one more attempt to save you.

Companion of my earliest years! friend of my youth! my beloved Julia!—by the happy innocent hours we have spent together—by the love you had for me—by the respect you bear to the memory of your mother—by the agony with which your father will hear of the loss of his daughter—by all that has power to touch your mind—I conjure you, I implore you to pause!—Farewell!

CAROLINE.

LETTER VII.

CAROLINE TO LORD V——, WRITTEN A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE PRECEDING LETTER.

MY LORD,

THOUGH I am too sensible that all connexion between my unfortunate friend and her family must for some time have been dissolved, I venture now to address myself to your lordship.

On Wednesday last, about half after six o'clock in the evening, the following note was brought to me. It had been written with such a trembling hand that it was scarcely legible; but I knew the writing too well.

"If you ever loved me, Caroline, read this—do not tear it the moment you see the name of Julia—she has suffered—she is humbled.—I left France with the hope of seeing you once more—but now I am so near you my courage fails, and my heart sinks within me—I have no friend upon earth—I deserve none—yet I cannot help wishing to see once more before I die the friend of my youth, to thank her with my last breath.

"But, dear Caroline, if I must not see you, write to me, if possible, one line of consolation.

"Tell me, is my father living—do you know any thing of my children?—I dare not ask for my husband—adieu!—I am so weak that I can scarcely write—I hope I shall soon be no more—Farewell! JULIA."

I immediately determined to follow the bearer of this letter.—Julia was waiting for my answer at a small inn, in a neighbouring village at a few miles distance.—It was night when I got there—every thing was silent—all the houses were shut up, excepting one, in which we saw two or three lights glimmering through the window;—this was the inn: as your lordship may imagine, it was a very miserable place—the mistress of the house seemed to be touched with pity for the stranger—she opened the door of a small room, where she said the poor lady was resting, and retired as I entered.

Upon a low matted seat beside the fire, sat lady V——; she was in black; her knees were crossed, and her white, but emaciated arms flung on one side over her lap, her hands were clasped together, and her eyes fixed upon the fire; she

seemed neither to hear or see any thing around her, but totally absorbed in her own reflections, to have sunk into insensibility.—I dreaded to rouse her from this state of torpor; and I believe I stood for some moments motionless:—at last I moved softly towards her—she turned her head—started up—a scarlet blush overspread her face—she grew livid again instantly, gave a faint shriek, and sunk senseless into my arms.

When she returned to herself, and found her head lying upon my shoulder, and heard my voice soothing her, with all the expressions of kindness I could think of, she smiled with a look of gratitude, which I never shall forget—like one who had been long unused to kindness, she seemed ready to pour forth all the fondness of her heart:—but as if recollecting herself better, she immediately checked her feelings—withdrew her hand from mine—thanked me—said she was quite well again—cast down her eyes, and her manner changed from tenderness to timidity. She seemed to think that she had lost all right to sympathy, and received even the common offices of humanity with surprise—her high spirit I saw was quite broken.

I think I never felt such sorrow, as I did in contemplating Julia at this instant:—she who stood before me sinking under the sense of inferiority, I knew to be my equal—my superior—yet by fatal imprudence, by one rash step, all her great, and good, and amiable qualities, were irretrievably lost to the world and to herself.

When I thought that she was a little recovered, I begged of her, if she was not too much fatigued, to let me carry her home; at these words she looked at me with surprise. Her eyes filled with tears, but without making any other reply, she suffered me to draw her arm within mine, and attempted to follow me. I did not know how feeble she was, till she began to walk; it was with the utmost difficulty I supported her to the door; and by the assistance of the people of the house she was lifted into the carriage:—we went very slowly—when the carriage stopped she was seized with an universal tremor—she started when the man knocked at the door, and seemed to dread its being opened. The appearance of light, and the sound of cheerful voices struck her with horror.

I could not myself help being shocked with the contrast between the dreadful situation of my friend and the happiness of the family to which I was returning.

Oh! said she, what are these voices?—Whither are you taking me?—For heaven's sake do not let any body see me!—I assured her that she should go directly to her own apart-

ment, and that no human being should approach her without her express permission.

Alas! it happened at this very moment that all my children came running with the utmost gaiety into the hall to meet us, and the very circumstance which I had been so anxious to prevent happened—little Julia was amongst them. The gaiety of the children suddenly ceased the moment they saw lady V—— coming up the steps—they were struck with her melancholy air, and countenance:—she, leaning upon my arm, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, let me lead her in, and sunk upon the first chair she came to.—I made a sign to the children to retire, but the moment they began to move, lady V—— looked up—saw her daughter—and now for the first time burst into tears. The little girl did not recollect her poor mother, till she heard the sound of her voice, and then she threw her arms round her neck, crying, "Is it you, mamma?"—and all the children immediately crowded round and asked, "if this was the same lady V——, who used to play with them?"

It is impossible to describe the effect these simple questions had on Julia:—a variety of emotions seemed struggling in her countenance; she rose and made an attempt to break from the children, but could not—she had not strength to support herself. We carried her away and put her to bed; she took no notice of any body, nor did she even seem to know that I was with her; I thought she was insensible, but as I drew the curtains I heard her give a deep sigh.

I left her and carried away her little girl, who had followed us up stairs and begged to stay with her mother, but I was apprehensive that the sight of her, might renew her agitation.

After I was gone they told me that she was perfectly still, with her eyes closed, and I stayed away some time, in hopes that she might sleep; however, about midnight she sent to beg to speak to me; she was very ill—she beckoned to me to sit down by her bed-side—every one left the room, and when Julia saw herself alone with me she took my hand, and in a low but calm voice, she said "I have not many hours to live—my heart is broken—I wished to see you, to thank you whilst it was yet in my power." She pressed my hand to her trembling lips—"Your kindness," added she, "touches me more than all the rest—but how ashamed you must be of such a friend.—Oh Caroline! to die a disgrace to all who ever loved me!"

The tears trickled down her face and choaked her utterance,—she wiped them away hastily:—"But it is not now a time," said she, "to think of myself—can I see my daughter?" The little girl was asleep—she was awakened, and I brought her to her mother.—Julia raised herself in her bed, and sum-

moning up all her strength—"My dearest friend!" said she, putting her child's hand into mine, "when I am gone, be a mother to this child—let her know my whole history, let nothing be concealed from her:——Poor girl, you will live to blush at your mother's name.——" She paused and leaned back—I was going to take the child away, but she held out her arms again for her, and kissed her several times.—"Farewell!" said she, "I shall never see you again." The little girl burst into tears—Julia wished to say something more—she raised herself again—at last she uttered these words with energy—"My love—*be good and happy*—" she then sunk down on the pillow quite exhausted—she never spoke afterwards—I took her hand—it was cold—her pulse scarcely beat—her eyes rolled without meaning—in a few moments she expired.

Painful as it has been to me to recall the circumstances of her death to my imagination, I have given your lordship this exact and detailed account of my unfortunate friend's behaviour in her last moments.—Whatever may have been her errors, her soul never became callous from vice. The sense of her own ill conduct was undoubtedly the immediate cause of her illness, and the remorse which had long preyed upon her mind, at length brought her to the grave—

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I have the honour to be, my Lord, &c.

CAROLINE.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE NOBLE SCIENCE OF

SELF-JUSTIFICATION.

"For which an eloquence that aims *to vex*,
With native tropes of anger arms the *sex*."

PARNEL.

ENDOWED, as the fair sex indisputably are, with a natural genius for the invaluable art of Self-Justification, it may not be displeasing to them to see its rising perfection evinced by an attempt to reduce it to a science. Possessed, as are all the fair daughters of Eve, of an hereditary propensity, transmitted to them undiminished through succeeding generations, to be "Soon moved with slightest touch of blame;" very little precept and practice will confirm them in the habit, and instruct them in all the maxims of Self-justification.

Candid pupil, you will readily accede to my first and fundamental axiom——That a lady can do no wrong.

But simple as this maxim may appear, and suited to the level of the meanest capacity, the talent of applying it on all the important, but more especially on all the most trivial, occurrences of domestic life, so as to secure private peace and public dominion, has hitherto been monopolized by the female adepts in the art of self-justification.

Excuse me for insinuating by this expression, that there may yet be amongst you some novices. To these, if any such, I principally address myself.

And now, lest fired with ambition you lose all by aiming at too much, let me explain and limit my first principle, "That

you can do no wrong." You must be aware that real perfection is beyond the reach of mortals; nor would I have you aim at it; indeed it is not in any degree necessary to our purpose. You have heard of the established belief in the infallibility of the sovereign pontiff, which prevailed not many centuries ago:—if man was allowed to be infallible, I see no reason why the same privilege should not be extended to woman;—but times have changed, and since the happy age of credulity is past, leave the opinions of men to their natural perversity; their actions are the best test of their faith. Instead then of a belief in your infallibility, endeavour to enforce implicit submission to your authority. This will give you infinitely less trouble, and will answer your purpose as well.

Right and wrong, if we go to the foundation of things, are, as casuists tell us, really words of very dubious signification, perpetually varying with custom and fashion, and to be adjusted ultimately by no other standards but opinion and force. Obtain power then by all means; power is the law of man; make it yours.

But to return from a frivolous disquisition about right, let me teach you the art of defending the wrong. After having thus pointed out to you the glorious end of your labours, I must now instruct you in the equally glorious means.

For the advantage of my subject I address myself chiefly to married ladies; but those who have not as yet the good fortune to have that common enemy, a husband, to combat, may in the mean time practise my precepts upon their fathers, brothers, and female friends; with caution, however, lest by discovering their arms too soon, they preclude themselves from the power of using them to the fullest advantage hereafter. I therefore recommend it to them to prefer, with a philosophical moderation, the future to the present.

Timid brides, you have, probably, hitherto been addressed as angels.—Prepare for the time when you shall again become mortal. Take the alarm at the first approach of blame; at the first hint of a discovery that you are any thing less than infallible:—contradict, debate, justify, recriminate, rage, weep, swoon, do any thing but yield to conviction.

I take it for granted that you have already acquired sufficient command of voice; you need not study its compass; going beyond its pitch has a peculiarly happy effect upon some occasions. But are you voluble enough to drown all sense in a torrent of words? Can you be loud enough to overpower the voice of all who shall attempt to interrupt or contradict you? Are you mistress of the petulant, the peevish, and the sullen tone? Have you practised the sharpness which provokes retort, and the continual monotony which by setting your adversary to sleep, effectually precludes reply?—an

event which is always to be considered as decisive of the victory, or at least as reducing it to a drawn battle:—you and Somnus divide the prize.

Thus prepared for an engagement, you will next, if you have not already done it, study the weak part of the character of your enemy—your husband I mean; if he be a man of high spirit, jealous of command, and impatient of control, one who decides for himself, and who is little troubled with the insanity of minding what the world says of him, you must proceed with extreme circumspection; you must not dare to provoke the combined forces of the enemy to a regular engagement, but harass him with perpetual petty skirmishes; in these, though you gain little at a time, you will gradually weary the patience, and break the spirit of your opponent. If he be a man of spirit, he must also be generous; and what man of generosity will contend for trifles with a woman who submits to him in all affairs of consequence; who is in his power; who is weak, and who loves him?

"Can superior with inferior power contend?" No, the spirit of a lion is not to be roused by the teazing of an insect.

But such a man as I have described, besides being as generous as he is brave, will probably be of an active temper; then you have an inestimable advantage; for he will set a high value upon a thing for which you have none—time;—he will acknowledge the force of your arguments merely from a dread of their length; he will yield to you in trifles, particularly in trifles which do not militate against his authority; not out of regard for you, but for his time; for what man can prevail upon himself to debate three hours about what could be as well decided in three minutes.

Lest amongst infinite variety, the difficulty of immediate selection should at first perplex you, let me point out, that matters of *taste* will afford you, of all others, the most ample and incessant subjects of debate. Here you have no criterion to appeal to. Upon the same principle, next to matters of taste, points of opinion will afford the most constant exercise to your talents. Here you will have an opportunity of citing the opinions of all the living and dead you have ever known, besides the dear privilege of repeating continually:—"Nay, you must allow *that*." Or, "You can't deny *this*, for it's the universal opinion—every body says so! every body thinks so! I wonder to hear you express such an opinion! Nobody but yourself is of that way of thinking." With innumerable other phrases, with which a slight attention to polite conversation will furnish you. This mode of opposing authority to argument, and assertion to proof, is of such universal utility, that I pray you to practise it.

If the point in dispute be some opinion relative to your character or disposition, allow in general, that "You are sure you have a great many faults;" but to every specific charge, reply, "Well, I am sure I don't know, but I did not think *that* was one of my faults! nobody ever accused me of that before! Nay, I was always remarkable for the contrary; at least before I was acquainted with you—Sir: in my own family I was always remarkable for the contrary; ask any of my own friends; ask any of them; they must know me best."

But if instead of attacking the material parts of your character, your husband should merely presume to advert to your manners, to some slight personal habit which might be made more agreeable to him; prove, in the first place, that it is his fault that it is not agreeable to him; ask which is most to blame, she who ceases to please, or he who ceases to be pleased.*—His eyes are changed, or opened.—But it may perhaps have been a matter almost of indifference to him, till you undertook its defence; then make it of consequence by rising in eagerness, in proportion to the insignificance of your object; if he can draw consequences, this will be an excellent lesson: if you are so tender of blame in the veriest trifle, how unimpeachable must you be in matters of importance. As to personal habits, begin by denying that you have any; or in the paradoxical language of Rousseau† declare that the only habit you have is the habit of having none; as all personal habits if they have been of any long standing must have become involuntary; the unconscious culprit may assert her innocence without hazarding her veracity.

However, if you happen to be detected in the very fact, and a person cries, "Now, now, you are doing it!" submit, but declare at the same moment—"That it is the very first time in your whole life, you were ever known to be guilty of it; that therefore it can be no habit, and of course no ways reprehensible."

Extend the rage for vindication to all the objects which the most remotely concern you; take even inanimate objects under your protection. Your dress, your furniture, your property, every thing which is, or has been yours defend, and this upon the principles of the soundest philosophy; each of these things all compose a part of your personal merit;‡ all that connected the most distinctly with your idea gives pleasure or pain to others, becomes an object of blame or praise, and consequently claims your support or vindication.

In the course of the management of your house, children, family, and affairs, probably some few errors of omission or commission may strike your husband's pervading eye; but

* Marmontel. † Emilius and Sophia. ‡ Vide Hume.

these errors, admitting them to be errors, you will never if you please allow to be charged to any deficiency in memory, judgment, or activity, on your part.

There are surely people enough around you to divide and share the blame; send it from one to another, till at last, by universal rejection, it is proved to belong to nobody. You will say however that facts remain unalterable; and that in some unlucky instance, in the changes and chances of human affairs, you may be proved to have been to blame. Some stubborn evidence may appear against you; still you may prove an alibi, or balance the evidence. There is nothing equal to balancing evidence; doubt is you know the most philosophic state of the human mind, and it will be kind of you to keep your husband perpetually in this sceptical state.

Indeed the short method of denying absolutely all blameable facts, I should recommend to pupils as the best; and if in the beginning of their career they may startle at this mode, let them depend upon it that in their future practice it must become perfectly familiar. The nice distinction of simulation and dissimulation depend but on the trick of a syllable; palliation and extenuation are universally allowable in self-defence; prevarication inevitably follows, and falsehood "is but in the next degree."

Yet I would not destroy this nicety of conscience too soon. It may be of use in your first setting out, because you must establish credit; in proportion to your credit, will be the value of your future asseverations.

In the mean time, however, argument and debate are allowable to the most rigid moralist. You can never perjure yourself by swearing to a false opinion.

I come now to the art of reasoning: don't be alarmed at the name of reasoning, fair pupils; I will explain to you my meaning.

If instead of the fiery tempered being, I formerly described, you should fortunately be connected with a man, who, having formed a justly high opinion of your sex, should propose to treat you as his equal, and who in any little dispute which might arise between you, should desire no other arbiter than reason; triumph in his mistaken candor, regularly appeal to the decision of reason at the beginning of every contest, and deny its jurisdiction at the conclusion. I take it for granted that you will be on the wrong side of every question, and indeed, in general, I advise you to choose the wrong side of an argument to defend; whilst you are young in the science, it will afford the best exercise, and as you improve, the best display of your talents.

If then, reasonable pupils, you would succeed in argument, attend to the following instructions.

Begin by preventing, if possible, the specific statement of any position, or if reduced to it, use the most *general terms*, and take advantage of the ambiguity which all languages, and which most philosophers allow. Above all things, shun definitions; they will prove fatal to you; for two persons of sense and candor, who define their terms, cannot argue long without either convincing, or being convinced, or parting in equal good humour; to prevent which go over and over the same ground, wander as wide as possible from the point, but always with a view to return at last precisely to the same spot from which you set out. I should remark to you, that the choice of your weapons is a circumstance much to be attended to: choose always those which your adversary cannot use. If your husband is a man of wit, you will of course undervalue a talent which is never connected with judgment: "for your part, you do not presume to contend with him in wit."

But if he be a sober minded man, who will go link by link along the chain of an argument, follow him at first, till he grows so intent that he does not perceive whether you follow him or not; then slide back to your own station, and when with perverse patience he has at last reached the last link of the chain, with one electric shock of wit, make him quit his hold, and strike him to the ground in an instant. Depend upon the sympathy of the spectators, for to one who can understand *reason*, you will find ten who admire *wit*.

But if you should not be blessed with "a ready wit;" if demonstration should in the mean time stare you in the face, do not be in the least alarmed; anticipate the blow. Whilst you have it yet in your power, rise with becoming magnanimity, and cry, "I give it up! I give it up! La! let us say no more about it; I do so hate disputing about trifles. I give it up!" Before an explanation on the word trifle can take place, quit the room with flying colours.

If you are a woman of sentiment and eloquence, you have advantages of which I scarcely need apprise you. From the understanding of a man, you have always an appeal to his heart; or if not to his affection, to his weakness. If you have the good fortune to be married to a weak man, always choose the moment to argue with him when you have a full audience. Trust to the sublime power of numbers; it will be of use even to excite your own enthusiasm in debate; then as the scene advances, talk of his cruelty, and your sensibility, and sink with "becoming woe," into the pathos of injured innocence.

Besides the heart and the weakness of your opponent, you have still another chance, in ruffling his temper; which, in the course of a long conversation, you will have a fair opportunity of trying; and if, for philosophers will sometimes grow warm in the defence of truth, if he should grow absolutely

angry you will in the same proportion grow calm, and wonder at his rage, though you well know it has been created by your own provocation. The by-standers, seeing anger without any adequate cause, will all be of your side.

Nothing provokes an irascible man, interested in debate, and possessed of an opinion of his own eloquence, so much as to see the attention of his hearers go from him: you will then, when he flatters himself that he has just fixed your eye with his *very best* argument, suddenly grow absent:—Your house affairs must call you hence—or you have directions to give to your children—or the room is too hot, or too cold—the window must be opened—or door shut—or the candle wants snuffing:—Nay, without these interruptions, the simple motion of your eye may provoke a speaker; a butterfly, or the figure in a carpet may engage your attention in preference to him; or if these objects be absent, the simply averting your eye, looking through the window in quest of outward objects, will shew that your mind has not been abstracted, and will display to him at least your wish of not attending; he may however possibly have lost the habit of watching your eye for approbation; then you may assault his ear. If all other resources fail, beat with your foot that dead march to the spirits, that incessant tattoo, which so well deserves its name. Marvellous must be the patience of the much enduring man, whom some or other of these devices do not provoke; slight causes often produce great effects; the simple scratching of a pick-axe, properly applied to certain veins in a mine, will cause the most dreadful explosions.

Hitherto we have only professed to teach the defensive; let me now recommend to you the offensive part of the art of justification. As a supplement to reasoning, comes recrimination; the pleasure of proving that you are right is surely incomplete, till you have proved that your adversary is wrong; this might have been a secondary, let it now become a primary object with you; rest your own defence on it for farther security; you are no longer to consider yourself as obliged, either to deny, palliate, argue, or declaim, but simply to justify yourself by criminating another; all merit, you know, is judged of by comparison. In the art of recrimination, your memory will be of the highest service to you; for you are to open and keep an account current of all the faults, mistakes, neglects, unkindnesses of those you live with; these you are to state against your own: I need not tell you that the balance will always be in your favour. In stating matters of opinion, produce the words of the very same person which passed days, months, years before, in contradiction to what he is then saying. By displacing, disjointing words and sentences, by

misunderstanding the whole, or quoting only a part of what has been said, you may convict any man of inconsistency; particularly if he be a man of genius and feeling, for he speaks generally from the impulse of the moment, and of all others can the least bear to be charged with paradoxes. So far for a husband.

Recriminating is also of sovereign use in the quarrels of friends; no friend is so perfectly equable, so ardent in affection, so nice in punctilio, as never to offend: then "Note his faults and con them by rote." Say you can forgive, but you can never forget; and surely it is much more generous to forgive and remember, than to forgive and forget. On every new alarm, call the unburied ghosts from former fields of battle; range them in tremendous array, call them one by one to witness against the conscience of your enemy, and ere the battle is begun, take from him all courage to engage.

There is one case I must observe to you, in which recrimination has peculiar poignancy. If you have had it in your power to confer obligations on any one, never cease reminding them of it; and let them feel that you have acquired an indefeasible right to reproach them without a possibility of their retorting. It is a maxim with some sentimental people, "To treat their servants as if they were their friends in distress."—I have observed that people of this cast make themselves amends, by treating their friends in distress as if they were their servants.

Apply this maxim—you may do it a thousand ways, especially in company. In general conversation, where every one is supposed to be on a footing, if any of your humble companions should presume to hazard an opinion contrary to yours, and should modestly begin with, "I think;—" look as the man did when he said to his servant, "You think! Sir—what business have you to think?"

Never fear to lose a friend by the habits which I recommend; reconciliations, as you have often heard it said—reconciliations are the cement of friendship; therefore friends should quarrel to strengthen their attachment, and offend each other for the pleasure of being reconciled.

I beg pardon for digressing,—I was, I believe, talking of your husband, not of your friend—I have gone far out of the way.

If in your debates with your husband, you should want "Eloquence to vex him," the dull prolixity of narration, joined in the complaining monotony of voice which I formerly recommended, will supply its place, and have the desired effect: Somnus will prove propitious; then, ever and anon as the soporific charm begins to work, rouse him with interrogato-

ries, such as, "Did not you so? Don't you remember? Only answer me that!"

By the bye, interrogatories artfully put may lead an unsuspicious reasoner, you know, always to your own conclusion.

In addition to the patience, philosophy, and other good things which Socrates learned from his wife, perhaps she taught him this mode of reasoning.

But after all, the precepts of art and even the natural susceptibility of your tempers, will avail you little in the sublime of our science, if you cannot command that ready enthusiasm which will make you enter into the part you are acting; that happy imagination which shall make you believe all you fear and all you invent.

Who is there amongst you who cannot or who will not justify when they are accused. Vulgar talent! the sublime of our science, is to justify before we are accused. There is no reptile so vile but what will turn when it is trodden on; but of a nicer sense and nobler species are those whom nature has endowed with antennæ, which perceive and withdraw at the distant approach of danger. Allow me another allusion; similies cannot be crowded too close for a female taste; and analogy, I have heard, my fair pupils, is your favourite mode of reasoning.

The sensitive plant is too vulgar an allusion; but if the truth of modern naturalists may be depended upon, there is a plant which instead of receding timidly, from the intrusive touch, angrily protrudes its venomous juices upon all who presume to meddle with it: do not you think this plant would be your fittest emblem?

Let me, however, recommend it to you, nice souls, who of the Mimosa kind, "Fear the dark cloud, and feel the coming storm," to take the utmost precaution, lest the same susceptibility which you cherish as the dear means to torment others, should insensibly become a torment to yourselves.

Distinguish then between sensibility and susceptibility; between the anxious solicitude not to give offence, and the captious eagerness of vanity to prove that it ought not to have been taken; distinguish between the desire of praise and the horror of blame; can any two things be more different than the wish to improve, and the wish to demonstrate that you have never been to blame?

Observe, I only wish you to distinguish these things in your own minds; I would by no means advise you to discontinue the laudable practice of confounding them perpetually in speaking to others.

When you have nearly exhausted human patience in explaining, justifying, vindicating,—when, in spite of all the pains you have taken, you have more than half betrayed your own

vanity, you have a never-failing resource, in paying tribute to that of your opponent, as thus:—

"I am sure you must be sensible that I should never take so much pains to justify myself if I were indifferent to your opinion.—I know that I ought not to disturb myself with such trifles, but nothing is a trifle to me which concerns you.—I confess I am too anxious to please, I know it's a fault, but I cannot cure myself of it now.—Too quick sensibility, I am conscious, is the defect of my disposition; it would be happier for me if I could be more indifferent, I know."

Who could be so brutal as to blame so amiable, so candid a creature? Who would not submit to be tormented with kindness?

When once your captive condescends to be flattered by such arguments as these, your power is fixed; your future triumphs can be bounded only by your own moderation; they are at once secured and justified.

Forbear not then, happy pupils:—but arrived at the summit of power, give a full scope to your genius, nor trust to genius alone: to exercise in all its extent your privileged dominion, you must acquire, or rather you must pretend to have acquired, infallible skill in the noble art of physiognomy; immediately the thoughts as well as the words of your subjects are exposed to your inquisition.

Words may flatter you, but the countenance never can deceive you; the eyes are the windows of the soul, and through them you are to watch what passes in the inmost recesses of the heart. There if you discern the slightest ideas of doubt, blame, or displeasure; if you discover the slightest symptoms of revolt, take the alarm instantly. Conquerors must maintain their conquests, and how easily can they do this, who hold a secret correspondence with the minds of the vanquished? Be your own spies then; from the looks, gestures, slightest motions of your enemies, you are to form an alphabet, a language, intelligible only to yourselves; yet by which you shall condemn them; always remembering that in sound policy, suspicion justifies punishment. In vain, when you accuse your friends of the high treason of blaming you, in vain let them plead their innocence, even of the intention. "They did not say a word which could be tortured into such a meaning." No, "but they looked daggers, though they used none."

And of this you are to be the sole judge, though there were fifty witnesses to the contrary.

How should indifferent spectators pretend to know the countenance of your friend, as well as you do? You that have a nearer, a dearer interest in attending to it? So accurate have been your observations, that no thought of their souls

escapes you; nay, you often can tell even what they are going to think of.

The science of divination, certainly claims your attention; beyond the past and the present, it shall extend your dominion over the future; from slight words, half finished sentences, from silence itself you shall draw your omens, and auguries.

"I know what you were going to say;" or, "I know such a thing was a sign you were inclined to be displeased with me."

In the ardor of innocence, the culprit to clear himself from such imputations, incurs the imputation of a greater offence. Suppose to prove that you were mistaken, to prove that he could not have meant to blame you, he should declare, that at the moment you mention, "You were quite foreign to his thoughts, he was not thinking at all about you."

Then in truth you have a right to be angry. To one of your class of justificators, this is the highest offence. Possessed as you are of the firm opinion, that all persons, at all times, on all occasions, are intent upon you alone, is it not less mortifying to discover that you were thought ill of, than that you were not thought of at all? "Indifference you know, sentimental pupils, is more fatal to love than even hatred."

Thus, my dear pupils, I have endeavoured to provide precepts, adapted to the display of your several talents; but if there should be any amongst you, who have no talents, who can neither argue nor persuade, who have neither sentiment nor enthusiasm, I must indeed—congratulate them;—they are peculiarly qualified for the science of Self-Justification: indulgent nature, often even in the weakness, provides for the protection of her creatures; just Providence, as the guard of stupidity, has enveloped it with the impenetrable armour of obstinacy.

Fair idiots! let women of sense, wit, feeling, triumph in their various arts, yours are superior. Their empire, absolute as it sometimes may be, is perpetually subject to sudden revolutions. With them, a man has some chance of equal sway; with a fool he has none. Have they hearts and understandings?—Then the one may be touched, or the other in some unlucky moment convinced; even in their very power lies their greatest danger:—not so with you.—In vain let the most candid of his sex attempt to reason with you; let him begin with, "Now, my dear, only listen to reason:"—You stop him at once with "No, my dear, you know I do not pretend to reason; I only say that's my opinion."

Let him go on to prove that yours is a mistaken opinion:—you are ready to acknowledge it, long before he desires it. "You acknowledge it may be a wrong opinion; but still it is your opinion." You do not maintain it in the least, either because you believe it to be wrong or right, but merely because

it is yours. Exposed as you might have been to the perpetual humiliation of being convinced, nature seems kindly to have denied you all perception of truth, or at least all sentiment of pleasure from the perception.

With an admirable humility, you are as well contented to be in the wrong as in the right; you answer all that can be said to you, with a provoking humility of aspect.

"Yes, I do not doubt but what you say may be very true, but I cannot tell; I do not think myself capable of judging on these subjects; I am sure you must know much better than I do. I do not pretend to say but what your opinion is very just; but I own I am of a contrary way of thinking; I always thought so and I always shall."

Should a man with persevering temper tell you, that he is ready to adopt your sentiments if you will only explain them; should he beg only to have a reason for your opinion—No, you can give no reason. Let him urge you to say something in its defence——No; like* Queen Anne, you will only repeat the same thing over again, or be silent. Silence is the ornament of your sex; and in silence, if there be not wisdom, there is safety. You will then, if you please, according to your custom, sit listening to all entreaties to explain, and speak—with a fixed immutability of posture, and a pre-determined deafness of ear, which shall put your opponent utterly out of patience; yet still by persevering with the same complacent importance of countenance, you shall half persuade people you could speak if you would; you shall keep them in doubt by that true want of meaning, "which puzzles more than wit;" even because they cannot conceive the excess of your stupidity, they shall actually begin to believe that they themselves are stupid. Ignorance and doubt are the great parents of the sublime.

Your adversary finding you impenetrable to argument, perhaps would try wit:—but, "On the impassive ice, the lightnings play." His eloquence or his kindness will avail less; when in yielding to you after a long harangue, he expects to please you, you will answer undoubtedly with the utmost propriety, "That you should be very sorry he yielded his judgment to you; that he is very good; that you are much obliged to him; but, that as to the point in dispute, it is a matter of perfect indifference to you; for your part you have no choice at all about it; you beg that he will do just what he pleases; you know that it is the duty of a wife to submit; but you hope, however, you may have an *opinion* of your own."

Remember all such speeches as these will lose above half their effect, if you cannot accompany them with the vacant

* Vide Duchess of Marlborough's Apology.

stare, the insipid smile, the passive aspect of the humbly perverse.

Whilst I write, new precepts rush upon my recollection; but the subject is inexhaustible. I quit it with regret, though fully sensible of my presumption in having attempted to instruct those, who whilst they read, will smile in the consciousness of superior powers. Adieu then, my fair readers!—— Long may you prosper in the practice of an art peculiar to your sex. Long may you maintain unrivalled dominion at home and abroad; and long may your husbands rue the hour when first they made you promise "*to obey*."

CASTLE RACKRENT,

AN

HIBERNIAN TALE.

TAKEN FROM FACTS,

AND FROM

THE MANNERS OF THE IRISH SQUIRES, BEFORE THE YEAR 1782.

PREFACE.

The prevailing taste of the public for anecdote has been censured and ridiculed by critics, who aspire to the character of superior wisdom; but if we consider it in a proper point of view, this taste is an incontestable proof of the good sense and profoundly philosophic temper of the present times. Of the numbers who study, or at least who read history, how few derive any advantage from their labours! The heroes of history are so decked out by the fine fancy of the professed historian; they talk in such measured prose, and act from such sublime or such diabolical motives, that few have sufficient taste, wickedness, or heroism, to sympathize in their fate. Besides, there is much uncertainty even in the best authenticated ancient or modern histories; and that love of truth, which in some minds is innate and immutable, necessarily leads to a love of secret memoirs and private anecdotes. We cannot judge either of the feelings or of the characters of men with perfect accuracy from their actions or their appearance in public; it is from their careless conversations, their half-finished sentences, that we may hope with the greatest probability of success to discover their real characters. The life of a great or of a little man written by himself, the familiar letters, the diary of any individual published by his friends, or by his enemies after his decease, are esteemed important literary curiosities. We are surely justified in this eager desire to collect the most minute fact relative to the domestic lives, not only of the great and good, but even of the worthless and insignificant, since it is only by a comparison of their actual happiness or misery in the privacy of domestic life, that we can form a just estimate of the real reward of virtue, or the real punishment of vice. That the great are not as happy as they seem, that the external circumstances of fortune and rank do not constitute felicity, is asserted by every moralist; the historian can seldom consistently with his dignity, pause to illustrate this truth, it is therefore to the biographer we must have recourse. After we have beheld splendid characters playing their part on the great theatre of the world, with all the advantages of stage effect and decoration, we anxious-

ly beg to be admitted behind the scenes, that we may take a nearer view of the actors and actresses.

Some may perhaps imagine, that the value of biography depends upon the judgment and taste of the biographer; but on the contrary, it may be maintained, that the merits of a biographer are inversely as the extent of his intellectual powers and of his literary talents. A plain unvarnished tale is preferable to the most highly ornamented narrative. Where we see that a man has the power, we may naturally suspect he has the will to deceive us, and those who are used to literary manufacture know how much is often sacrificed to the rounding of a period or the pointing an antithesis.

That the ignorant may have their prejudices as well as the learned cannot be disputed, but we see and despise vulgar errors; we never bow to the authority of him who has no great name to sanction his absurdities. The partiality which blinds a biographer to the defects of his hero, in proportion as it is gross, ceases to be dangerous; but if it be concealed under the appearance of candour, which men of great abilities best know how to assume, it endangers our judgment sometimes, and sometimes our morals. If her Grace the duchess of Newcastle, instead of penning her lord's elaborate eulogium, had undertaken to write the life of Savage, we should not have been in any danger of mistaking an idle, ungrateful libertine, for a man of genius and virtue. The talents of a biographer are often fatal to his reader. For these reasons the public often judiciously countenances those who without sagacity to discriminate character, without elegance of style, to relieve the tediousness of narrative, without enlargement of mind to draw any conclusions from the facts they relate, simply pour forth anecdotes and retail conversations, with all the minute prolixity of a gossip in a country town.

The author of the following memoirs has upon these grounds fair claims to the public favour and attention; he was an illiterate old steward, whose partiality to the *family* in which he was bred and born must be obvious to the reader. He tells the history of the Rackrent family in his vernacular idiom, and in the full confidence that Sir Patrick, Sir Murtagh, Sir Kitt, and Sir Condy Rackrent's affairs, will be as interesting to all the world as they were to himself. Those who were acquainted with the manners of a certain class of the gentry of Ireland some years ago, will want no evidence of the truth of honest Thady's narrative: to those who are totally unacquainted with Ireland, the following Memoirs will perhaps be scarcely intelligible, or probably they may appear perfectly incredible. For the information of the *ignorant* English reader a few notes have been subjoined by the editor,

and he had it once in contemplation to translate the language of Thady into plain English; but Thady's idiom is incapable of translation; and besides, the authenticity of his story would have been more exposed to doubt, if it were not told in his own characteristic manner. Several years ago he related to the editor the history of the Rackrent family, and it was with some difficulty that he was persuaded to have it committed to writing; however, his feelings for "*the honour of the family*," as he expressed himself, prevailed over his habitual laziness, and he at length completed the narrative which is now laid before the public.

The editor hopes his readers will observe, that these are "tales of other times;" that the manners depicted in the following pages are not those of the present age: the race of the Rackrents has long since been extinct in Ireland, and the drunken Sir Patrick, the litigious Sir Murtagh, the fighting Sir Kitt, and the slovenly Sir Condy, are characters which could no more be met with at present in Ireland, than Squire Western or Parson Trulliber in England. There is a time when individuals can bear to be rallied for their past follies and absurdities, after they have acquired new habits and a new consciousness. Nations as well as individuals gradually lose attachment to their identity, and the present generation is amused rather than offended by the ridicule that is thrown upon their ancestors.

Probably we shall soon have it in our power, in a hundred instances, to verify the truth of these observations.

When Ireland loses her identity by an union with Great Britain, she will look back with a smile of good humoured complacency on the Sir Kitts and Sir Condys of her former existence.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Some friends who have seen Thady's history since it has been printed, have suggested to the Editor, that many of the terms and idiomatic phrases with which it abounds, could not be intelligible to the English reader, without farther explanation. The editor has therefore furnished a Glossary at the conclusion of the work.

CASTLE RACKRENT.

Monday Morning.

HAVING out of friendship for the family, upon whose estate, praised be heaven! I and mine had lived rent free time out of mind, voluntarily undertaken to publish the memoirs of the Rackrent family, I think it my duty to say a few words, in the first place, concerning myself.—My real name is Thady Quirk, though in the family I have always been known by no other than "*honest Thady*"—afterwards, in the time of Sir Murtagh, deceased, I remember to hear them calling me "*old Thady*;" and now I'm come to "poor Thady," for I wear a long great coat* winter and summer, which is very handy, as

* The cloak, or mantle, as described by Thady, is of high antiquity.—Spencer, in his "View of the State of Ireland," proves that it is not, as some have imagined, peculiarly derived from the Scythians, but that "most nations of the world anciently used the mantle; for the Jews used it, as you may read of Elias's mantle, &c.; the Chaldees also used it, as you may read in Diodorus; the Egyptians likewise used it, as you may read in Herodotus, and may be gathered by the description of Berenice, in the Greek Commentary upon Callimachus; the Greeks also used it anciently, as appeareth by Venus's mantle lined with stars, though afterwards they changed the form thereof into their cloaks, called Pallia, as some of the Irish also use: and the ancient Latins and Romans used it, as you may read in Virgil, who was a very great antiquary, that Evander, when Eneas came to him at his feast, did entertain and feast him sitting on the ground, and laying on mantles; insomuch as he useth the very word mantile for a mantle,

'—Humi mantilia sternunt.'

so that it seemeth that the mantle was a general habit to most nations, and not proper to the Scythians only."

Spencer knew the convenience of the said mantle, as housing, bedding, and clothing.

"*Iren.* Because the commodity doth not countervail the discommodity; for the inconveniences which thereby do arise, are much more many; for it is a fit house for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloak for a thief.—First, the outlaw being, for his many crimes and villanies, banished from the towns and houses of honest men, and wandering in waste places, far from danger of law, maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of the earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth, it is his penthouse; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In summer he can wear it loose; in winter he can wrap it close; at all times he can use it; never heavy, never cumbersome. Likewise for a rebel it is as serviceable; for in this war that he maketh (if at least it deserve the name of war,) when he still flieth from his foe, and lurketh in the *thick woods, (this should be black bogs,)* and strait passages waiting for advantages; it is his bed, yea, and almost his household stuff."

I never put my arms into the sleeves, (they are as good as new,) though come Holantide next, I've had it these seven years, it holds on by a single button round my neck, cloak fashion; to look at me you would hardly think "poor Thady" was the father of attorney Quirk; he is a high gentleman and never minds what poor Thady says, and having better than fifteen hundred a year, landed estate, looks down upon honest Thady; but I wash my hands of his doings, and as I have lived, so will I die, true and loyal to the family.—The family of the Rackrents is, I am proud to say, one of the most ancient in the kingdom.—Every body knows this is not the old family name, which was O'Shaughlin, related to the Kings of Ireland—but that was before my time.—My grandfather was driver to the great Sir Patrick O'Shaughlin, and I heard him, when I was a boy, telling how the Castle Rackrent estate came to Sir Patrick—Sir Tallyhoo Rackrent was cousin-german to him, and had a fine estate of his own, only never a gate upon it, it being his maxim, that a car was the best gate.—Poor gentleman! he lost a fine hunter and his life, at last, by it, all in one day's hunt.—But I ought to bless that day, for the estate came straight into *the* family, upon one condition, which Sir Patrick O'Shaughlin at the time took sadly to heart, they say, but thought better of it afterwards, seeing how large a stake depended upon it, that he should by act of parliament, take and bear the surname and arms of Rackrent.

Now it was that the world was to see what was *in* Sir Patrick —On coming into the estate, he gave the finest entertainment ever was heard of in the country—not a man could stand after supper but Sir Patrick himself, who could sit out the best man in Ireland, let alone the three kingdoms itself.——He had his house, from one year's end to another, as full of company as ever it could hold, and fuller; for rather than be left out of the parties at Castle Rackrent, many gentlemen, and those men of the first consequence and landed estates in the country, such as the O'Neils of Ballynagrotty, and the Castle-moneygaws of Mount Juliet's Town, and O'Shannons of New Town Tullyhog, made it their choice, often and often, when there was no moon to be had for love or money, in long winter nights, to sleep in the chicken house, which Sir Patrick had fitted up for the purpose of accommodating his friends and the public in general who honoured him with their company unexpectedly at Castle Rackrent; and this went on, I can't tell you how long—the whole country rang with his praises—Long life to him!—I'm sure I love to look upon his picture, now opposite to me; though I never saw him, he must have been a portly gentleman—his neck something short, and remarkable for the largest pimple on his nose,

which, by his particular desire, is still extant in his picture—said to be a striking likeness, though taken when young. He is said also to be the inventor of raspberry whiskey, which is very likely, as nobody has ever appeared to dispute it with him, and as there still exists a broken punch-bowl at Castle Rackrent, in the garret, with an inscription to that effect—a great curiosity. A few days before his death he was very merry; it being his honour's birth day, he called my great grandfather in, God bless him! to drink the company's health, and filled a bumper himself, but could not carry it to his head, on account of the great shake in his hand—on this he cast his joke, saying, "What would my poor father say to me if he was to pop out of the grave, and see me now?—I remember, when I was a little boy, the first bumper of claret he gave me after dinner, how he praised me for carrying it so steady to my mouth—Here's my thanks to him—a bumper toast"—— Then he fell to singing the favourite song he learned from his father—for the last time, poor gentleman—he sung it that night as loud and as hearty as ever, with a chorus—

> "He that goes to bed, and goes to bed sober,
> Falls as the leaves do, falls as the leaves do, and dies in October—
> But he that goes to bed, and goes to bed mellow,
> Lives as he ought to do, lives as he ought to do, and dies an honest fellow"

Sir Patrick died that night; just as the company rose to drink his health with three cheers, he fell down in a sort of a fit, and was carried off—they sat it out, and were surprised, on inquiry, in the morning, to find it was all over with poor Sir Patrick. Never did any gentleman live and die more beloved in the country by rich and poor—his funeral was such a one as was never known before nor since in the county! all the gentlemen in the three counties were at it—far and near, how they flocked—my great grandfather said, that to see all the women even in their red cloaks, you would have taken them for the army drawn out. Then such a fine whillaluh! you might have heard it to the farthest end of the county, and happy the man who could get but a sight of the hearse! but who'd have thought it, just as all was going on right, through his own town they were passing, when the body was seized for debt—a rescue was apprehended from the mob—but the heir who attended the funeral was against that, for fear of consequences, seeing that those villains who came to serve acted under the disguise of the law—So, to be sure, the law must take its course—and little gain had the creditors for their pains. First and foremost, they had the curses of the country; and Sir Murtagh Rackrent, the new heir, in the next place, on account of this affront to the body, refused to pay a shilling of the debts, in which he was countenanced by all the

best gentlemen of property, and others of his acquaintance; Sir Murtagh alleging in all companies, that he all along meant to pay his father's debts of honour; but the moment the law was taken of him, there was an end of honour to be sure. It was whispered, (but none of the enemies of the family believe it) that this was all a sham seizure to get quit of the debts, which he had bound himself to pay in honour.

It's a long time ago, there's no saying how it was, but this for certain, the new man did not take at all after the old gentleman. The cellars were never filled after his death—and no open house, or any thing as it used to be—the tenants even were sent away without their whiskey—I was ashamed myself, and knew not what to say for the honour of the family—But I made the best of a bad case, and laid it all at my lady's door, for I did not like *her* any how, nor any body else—she was of the family of the Skinflints, and a widow. It was a strange match for Sir Murtagh: the people in the country thought he demeaned himself greatly—but *I* said nothing—I knew how it was—Sir Murtagh was a great lawyer, and looked to the great Skinflint estate; there, however, he overshot himself; for though one of the co-heiresses, he was never the better for her, for she outlived him many's the long day—he could not foresee that, to be sure, when he married her. I must say for her, she made him the best of wives, being a very notable stirring woman, and looking close to every thing. But I always suspected she had Scotch blood in her veins, any thing else I could have looked over in her from a regard to the family. She was a strict observer for self and servants of Lent, and all Fast days, but not holydays. One of the maids having fainted three times the last day of Lent, to keep soul and body together we put a morsel of roast beef into her mouth, which came from Sir Murtagh's dinner, who never fasted, not he; but somehow or other it unfortunately reached my lady's ears, and the priest of the parish had a complaint made of it the next day, and the poor girl was forced, as soon as she could walk, to do penance for it, before she could get any peace or absolution in the house or out of it. However, my lady was very charitable in her own way. She had a charity school for poor children, where they were taught to read and write gratis, and where they were kept well to spinning gratis for my lady in return; for she had always heaps of duty yarn from the tenants, and got all her household linen out of the estate from first to last; for after the spinning, the weavers on the estate took it in hand for nothing, because of the looms my lady's interest could get from the Linen board to distribute gratis. Then there was a bleach-yard near us, and the tenant dare refuse my lady nothing, for fear of a lawsuit Sir Murtagh kept hanging over him about the water

course. With these ways of managing, 'tis surprising how cheap my lady got things done, and how proud she was of it. Her table the same way—kept for next to nothing—duty fowls, and duty turkeys, and duty geese, came as fast as we could eat 'em, for my lady kept a sharp look out, and knew to a tub of butter every thing the tenants had, all round. They knew her way, and what with fear of driving for rent, and Sir Murtagh's lawsuits, they were kept in such good order, they never thought of coming near Castle Stopgap without a present of something or other; nothing too much or too little for my lady—eggs—honey—butter—meal—fish—game, growse, and herrings, fresh or salt, all went for something. As for their young pigs, we had them, and the best bacon and hams they could make up, with all young chickens in spring; but they were a set of poor wretches, and we had nothing but misfortunes with them, always breaking and running away. This, Sir Murtagh and my lady said, was all their former landlord Sir Patrick's fault, who let 'em all get the half year's rent into arrear; there was something in that to be sure. But Sir Murtagh was as much the contrary way. For let alone making English tenants of them, every soul; he was always driving and driving, and pounding and pounding, and canting and canting, and replevying and replevying, and he made a good living of trespassing cattle; there was always some tenant's pig, or horse, or cow, or calf, or goose, trespassing, which was so great a gain to Sir Murtagh, that he did not like to hear me talk of repairing fences. Then his herriots and duty work brought him in something—his turf was cut—his potatoes set and dug—his hay brought home, and in short, all the work about his house done for nothing; for in all our leases there were strict clauses with heavy penalties, which Sir Murtagh knew well how to enforce; so many days' duty work of man and horse, from every tenant, he was to have, and had, every year; and when a man vexed him, why the finest day he could pitch on, when the cratur was getting in his own harvest, or thatching his cabin, Sir Murtagh made it a principle to call upon him and his horse. So he taught 'em all, as he said, to know the law of landlord and tenant. As for law, I believe no man, dead or alive, ever loved it so well as Sir Murtagh. He had once sixteen suits pending at a time, and I never saw him so much himself—roads—lanes—bogs—wells—ponds—eel wires—orchards—trees—tithes—vagrants—gravel pits—sand pits—dunghills and nuisances, every thing upon the face of the earth furnished him good matter for a suit. He used to boast that he had a law-suit for every letter in the alphabet. How I used to wonder to see Sir Murtagh in the midst of the papers in his office!—why he could hardly turn about for them. I made bold to shrug my

shoulders once in his presence, and thanked my stars I was not born a gentleman to so much toil and trouble—but Sir Murtagh took me up short with his old proverb, "learning is better than house or land." Out of forty-nine suits which he had, he never lost one but seventeen; the rest he gained with costs, double costs, treble costs sometimes——but even that did not pay. He was a very learned man in the law, and had the character of it; but how it was I can't tell, these suits that he carried cost him a power of money—in the end he sold some hundreds a year of the family estate—but he was a very learned man in the law, and I know nothing of the matter, except having a great regard for the family. I could not help grieving when he sent me to post up notices of the sale of the fee simple of the lands and appurtenances of Timoleague. "I know, honest Thady," says he, to comfort me, "what I'm about better than you do; I'm only selling to get the ready money wanting, to carry on my suit with spirit with the Nugents of Carrickashaughlin."

He was very sanguine about that suit with the Nugents of Carrickashaughlin. He would have gained it, they say, for certain, had it pleased heaven to have spared him to us, and it would have been at the least a plump two thousand a year in his way; but things were ordered otherwise, for the best to be sure. He dug up a fairy mount* against my advice, and had no luck afterwards. Though a learned man in the law, he was a little too incredulous in other matters. I warned him that I heard the very Banshee† that my grandfather heard, before I was born long, under Sir Patrick's window a few days before his death. But Sir Murtagh thought nothing of the Banshee, nor of his cough with a spitting of blood, brought on, I understand, by catching cold in attending the courts, and overstraining his chest with making himself heard in one of his favourite causes. He was a great speaker, with a powerful voice; but his last speech was not in the courts at all. He and my lady, though both of the same way of thinking in some things, and though she was as good a wife and great economist as you could see, and he the best of husbands,

* These fairy mounts are called ant-hills in England. They are held in high reverence by the common people in Ireland. A gentleman, who in laying out his lawn had occasion to level one of these hillocks, could not prevail upon any of his labourers to begin this ominous work. He was obliged to take a *loy* from one of their reluctant hands, and began the attack himself. The labourers agreed that the vengeance of the fairies would fall upon the head of the presumptuous mortal who first disturbed them in their retreat.

† The Banshee is a species of aristocratic fairy, who in the shape of a little hideous old woman has been known to appear, and heard to sing in a mournful supernatural voice under the windows of great houses, to warn the family that some of them are soon to die. In the last century every great family in Ireland had a Banshee, who attended regularly, but latterly their visits and songs have been discontinued.

as to looking into his affairs, and making money for his family; yet I don't know how it was, they had a great deal of sparring and jarring between them. My lady had her privy purse—and she had her weed ashes, and her sealing money upon the signing of all the leases, with something to buy gloves besides; and besides again, often took money from the tenants, if offered properly, to speak for them to Sir Murtagh about abatements and renewals. Now the weed ashes and the glove money he allowed her clear perquisites; though once when he saw her in a new gown saved out of the weed ashes, he told her to my face, (for he could say a sharp thing) that she should not put on her weeds before her husband's death.——But it grew more serious when they came to the renewal business. At last, in a dispute about an abatement, my lady would have the last word, and Sir Murtagh grew mad; I was within hearing of the door, and now I wish I had made bold to step in. He spoke so loud, the whole kitchen was out on the stairs. All on a sudden he stopped, and my lady too. Something has surely happened, thought I—and so it was, for Sir Murtagh in his passion broke a blood vessel, and all the law in the land could do nothing in that case. My lady sent for five physicians, but Sir Murtagh died, and was buried. She had a fine jointure settled upon her, and took herself away to the great joy of the tenantry. I never said any thing, one way or the other, whilst she was part of the family, but got up to see her go at three o'clock in the morning—"It's a fine morning, honest Thady," says she; "good bye to ye"—and into the carriage she stept, without a word more, good or bad, or even half-a-crown; but I made my bow, and stood to see her safe out of sight, for the sake of the family.

Then we were all bustle in the house, which made me keep out of the way, for I walk slow, and hate a bustle, but the house was all hurry-skurry, preparing for my new master. Sir Murtagh, I forgot to notice, had no childer,* so the Rackrent estate went to his younger brother—a young dashing officer—who came amongst us before I knew, for the life of me, whereabouts I was, in a gig or some of them things, with another spark along with him, and led horses, and servants, and dogs, and scarce a place to put any Christian of them into; for my late lady had sent all the feather beds off before her, and blankets, and household linen, down to the very knife cloths, on the cars to Dublin, which were all her own, lawfully paid for out of her own money. So the house was quite

* *Childer*—this is the manner in which many of Thady's rank, and others in Ireland, *formerly* pronounced the word *children*.

bare, and my young master, the moment ever he set foot in it out of his gig, thought all those things must come of themselves, I believe, for he never looked after any thing at all, but harum-scarum called for every thing as if we were conjurers, or he in a public house. For my part, I could not bestir myself any how; I had been so much used to my late master and mistress, all was upside down with me, and the new servants in the servants' hall were quite out of my way; I had nobody to talk to, and if it had not been for my pipe and tobacco, should, I verily believe, have broke my heart for poor Sir Murtagh.

But one morning my new master caught a glimpse of me as I was looking at his horse's heels, in hopes of a word from him—and is that old Thady! says he, as he got into his gig—I loved him from that day to this, his voice was so like the family—and he threw me a guinea out of his waistcoat pocket, as he drew up the reins with the other hand, his horse rearing too; I thought I never set my eyes on a finer figure of a man—quite another sort from Sir Murtagh, though withal *to me* a family likeness. A fine life we should have led, had he stayed amongst us, God bless him!—he valued a guinea as little as any man; money to him was no more than dirt, and his gentleman and groom and all belonging to him, the same; but the sporting season over, he grew tired of the place, and having got down a great architect for the house, and an improver for the grounds, and seen their plans and elevations, he fixed a day for settling with the tenants, but went off in a whirlwind to town, just as some of them came into the yard in the morning. A circular letter came next post from the new agent, with news that the master was sailed for England, and he must remit £500 to Bath for his use, before a fortnight was at an end. Bad news still for the poor tenants, no change still for the better with them. Sir Kit Rackrent my young master, left all to the agent, and though he had the spirit of a prince, and lived away to the honour of his country abroad, which I was proud to hear of, what were we the better for that at home? The agent was one of your middle men* who

* *Middle men.*—There was a class of men termed middle men in Ireland, who took large farms on long leases from gentlemen of landed property, and set the land again in small portions to the poor, as under tenants, at exorbitant rents. The *head landlord*, as he *was* called, seldom saw his *under tenants*, but if he could not get the *middle man* to pay him his rent punctually, he *went to the land, and drove the land for his rent*, that is to say, he sent his steward or bailiff, or driver, to the land, to seize the cattle, hay, corn, flax, oats, or potatoes, belonging to the under tenants, and proceeded to sell these for his rent; it sometimes happened that these unfortunate tenants paid their rent twice over, once to the *middle man*, and once to the *head landlord*.

The characteristics of a middle man, *were* servility to his superiors, and tyranny towards his inferiors.—The poor detested this race of beings. In speaking to them, however, they always used the most abject language, and *the most* humble tone and posture—"*Please your honour,—and please your*

grind the face of the poor, and can never bear a man with a hat upon his head; he ferreted the tenants out of their lives; not a week without a call for money; drafts upon drafts from Sir Kit; but I laid it all to the fault of the agent; for, says I, what can Sir Kit do with so much cash, and he a single man? but still it went. Rents must be all paid up to the day, and afore; no allowance for improving tenants; no consideration for those who had built upon their farms. No sooner was a lease out, but the land was advertised to the highest bidder; all the old tenants turned out, when they had spent their substance in the hope and trust of a renewal from the landlord. All was now set at the highest penny to a parcel of poor wretches who meant to run away, and did so, after taking two crops out of the ground. Then fining down the year's rent came into fashion; any thing for the ready penny, and with all this, and presents to the agent and the driver, there was no such thing as standing it.—I said nothing, for I had a regard for the family, but I walked about, thinking if his honour Sir Kit, (long may he live to reign over us!) knew all this, it would go hard with him, but he'd see us righted; not that I had any thing for my own share to complain of, for the agent was always very civil to me, when he came down into the country, and took a great deal of notice of my son Jason. Jason Quirk, though he be my son, I must say, was a good scholar from his birth, and a very 'cute lad—I thought to make him a priest, but he did better for himself. Seeing how he was as good a clerk as any in the county, the agent gave him his rent accounts to copy, which he did first of all for the pleasure of obliging the gentleman, and would take nothing at all for his trouble, but was always proud to serve the family. —By and by, a good farm, bounding us to the east, fell into his honour's hands, and my son put in a proposal for it; why should'nt he as well as another? The proposals all went over to the master at the Bath, who knowing no more of the land than the child unborn, only having once been out a grousing on it before he went to England; and the value of lands, as the agent informed him, falling every year in Ireland, his honour wrote over in all haste a bit of a letter, saying he left it all to the agent, and that he must set it as well as he could to the best bidder, to be sure, and send him over £200 by return of post: with this the agent gave me a hint, and I spoke a good word for my son, and gave out in the country, that nobody need bid against us. So his proposal

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honour's honour," they knew must be repeated as a charm at the beginning and end of every equivocating, exculpatory, or supplicatory sentence—and they were much more alert in doffing their caps to these new men, than to those of what they call *good old families*.—A witty carpenter once termed these middle men *journeymen gentlemen*.

was just the thing, and he a good tenant; and he got a promise of an abatement in the rent, after the first year, for advancing the half year's rent at signing the lease, which was wanting to complete the agent's £200 by the return of the post, with all which my master wrote back he was well satisfied. About this time we learned from the agent, as a great secret, how the money went so fast, and the reason of the thick coming of the master's drafts; he was a little too fond of play; and Bath, they say was no place for a young man of his fortune, where there were so many of his own countrymen too haunting him up and down, day and night, who had nothing to lose; at last, at Christmas, the agent wrote over to stop the drafts, for he could raise no more money on bond or mortgage, or from the tenants, or any how, nor had he any more to lend himself, and desired at the same time to decline the agency for the future, wishing Sir Kit his health and happiness, and the compliments of the season; for I saw the letter before ever it was sealed, when my son copied it. When the answer came, there was a new turn in affairs, and the agent was turned out; and my son Jason, who had corresponded privately with his honour occasionally on business, was forthwith desired by his honour to take the accounts into his own hands, and look them over till further orders. It was a very spirited letter, to be sure; Sir Kit sent his service, and the compliments of the season, in return to the agent, and he would fight him with pleasure to-morrow, or any day, for sending him such a letter, if he was born a gentleman, which he was sorry (for both their sakes) to find (too late) he was not. Then, in a private postscript, he condescended to tell us that all would be speedily settled to his satisfaction, and we should turn over a new leaf, for he was going to be married in a fortnight to the grandest heiress in England, and had only immediate occasion at present for £200 as he would not choose to touch his lady's fortune for travelling expenses home to Castle Rackrent, where he intended to be, wind and weather permitting, early in the next month, and desired fires, and the house to be painted, and the new building to go on as fast as possible, for the reception of him and his lady before that time; with several words besides in the letter, which we could not make out, because, God bless him! he wrote in such a flurry. My heart warmed to my new lady when I read this; I was almost afraid it was too good news to be true; but the girls fell to scouring, and it was well they did, for we soon saw his marriage in the paper to a lady with I don't know how many tens of thousand pounds to her fortune; then I watched the post-office for his landing, and the news came to my son of his and the bride being in Dublin, and on the way home to Rackrent Gap. We had bon-

fires all over the country, expecting him down the next day, and we had his coming of age still to celebrate, which he had not time to do properly before he left the country; therefore a great ball was expected, and great doings upon his coming, as it were, fresh to take possession of his ancestors' estate.—I never shall forget the day he came home: we had waited and waited all day long till eleven o'clock at night, and I was thinking of sending the boy to lock the gates, and giving them up for that night, when there came the carriages thundering up to the great hall door; I got the first sight of the bride; for when the carriage door opened just as she had her foot on the steps, I held the flam full in her face to light her, at which she shut her eyes, but I had a full view of the rest of her, and greatly shocked I was, for by that light she was little better than a black-a-moor, and seemed crippled, but that was only sitting so long in the chariot—"You're kindly welcome to Castle Rackrent, my lady," says I, (recollecting who she was) —"Did your honour hear of the bonfires?" His honour spoke never a word, nor so much as handed her up the steps; he looked to me no more like himself than nothing at all; I know I took him for the skeleton of his honour. I was not sure what to say next to one or t'other, but seeing she was a stranger in a foreign country, I thought it but right to speak cheerful to her, so I went back again to the bonfires—"My lady (says I, as she crossed the hall) there would have been fifty times as many, but for fear of the horses, and frightening your ladyship: Jason and I forbid them, please your honour."—With that she looked at me a little bewildered. "Will I have a fire lighted in the state room to-night?" was the next question I put to her; but never a word she answered, so I concluded she could not speak a word of English, and was from foreign parts. The short and the long of it was, I couldn't tell what to make of her, so I left her to herself, and went straight down to the servants' hall to learn something for certain about her. Sir Kit's own man was tired, but the groom set him a talking at last, and we had it all out before ever I closed my eyes that night. The bride might well be a great fortune—she was a *Jewish* by all accounts, who are famous for their great riches. I had never seen any of that tribe or nation before, and could only gather that she spoke a strange kind of English of her own, that she could not abide pork or sausages, and went neither to church nor mass. Mercy upon his honour's poor soul, thought I, what will become of him and his, and all of us, with this heretic Black-a-moor at the head of the Castle Rackrent estate. I never slept a wink all night for thinking of it, but before the servants I put my pipe in my mouth and kept my mind to myself; for I had a great regard for the family, and after this, when strange gentlemen's servants came

to the house, and would begin to talk about the bride, I took care to put the best foot foremost, and passed her for a Nabob in the kitchen, which accounted for her dark complexion, and every thing.

The very morning after they came home, however, I saw how things were, plain enough, between Sir Kit and my lady, though they were walking together arm in arm, after breakfast, looking at the new building and the improvements. "Old Thady," said my master, just as he used to do, "how do you do?"—"Very well, I thank your honour's honour," said I, but I saw he was not well pleased, and my heart was in my mouth as I walked along after him. "Is the large room damp, Thady?" said his honour. "Oh, damp, your honour! how should it but be as dry as a bone," says I, "after all the fires we have kept in it day and night—It's the barrack room your honour's talking on"—"And what is a barrack room, pray, my dear?"—were the first words I ever heard out of my lady's lips. "No matter, my dear," said he, and went on talking to me, ashamed like I should witness her ignorance. To be sure to hear her talk, one might have taken her for an innocent, for it was, "What's this, Sir Kit?" and "What's that, Sir Kit?" all the way we went. To be sure, Sir Kit had enough to do to answer her. "And what do you call that, Sir Kit?" said she, "that, that looks like a pile of black bricks, pray Sir Kit?" "My turf stack, my dear," said my master, and bit his lip. Where have you lived, my lady, all your life, not to know a turf stack when you see it, thought I, but I said nothing. Then, by-and-by, she takes out her glass, and begins spying over the country—"And what's all that black swamp out yonder, Sir Kit?" says she. "My bog, my dear," says he, and went on whistling: "It's a very ugly prospect, my dear," says she, "You don't see it my dear," says he, "for we've planted it out, when the trees grow up in summer time," says he—"Where are the trees," said she "my dear," still looking through her glass. "You are blind, my dear," says he "what are these under your eyes?" "These shrubs?" said she. "Trees," said he. "May be they are what you call trees in Ireland, my dear," says she "but they are not a yard high, are they?" "They were planted out but last year, my lady," says I, to soften matters between them, for I saw she was going the way to make his honour mad with her. "They are very well grown for their age, and you'll not see the bog of Allyballycarricko'shaughlin at all at all through the skreen, when once the leaves come out. But, my lady you must not quarrel with any part or parcel of Allyballycarricko'shaughlin, for you don't know how many hundred years that same bit of bog has been in the family, we would not part with the bog of Allyballycarricko'shaughlin upon no ac-

count at all; it cost the late Sir Murtagh two hundred good pounds to defend his title to it, and boundaries, against the O'Learys, who cut a road through it." Now one would have thought this would have been hint enough for my lady, but she fell to laughing like one out of their right mind, and made me say the name of the bog over for her to get it by heart, a dozen times; then she must ask me how to spell it, and what was the meaning of it in English; Sir Kit standing by whistling all the while. I verily believe she laid the corner stone of all her future misfortunes at that very instant; but I said no more, only looked at Sir Kit.

There were no balls, no dinners, no doings, the country was all disappointed. Sir Kit's gentleman said, in a whisper to me, it was all my lady's own fault, because she was so obstinate about the cross—"What cross? (says I) is it about her being a heretick?"—"Oh, no such matter, (says he) my master does not mind her heresies, but her diamond cross, it's worth I can't tell you how much, and she has thousands of English pounds concealed in diamonds about her, which she as good as promised to give up to my master before he married, but now she won't part with any of them, and she must take the consequences.

Her honey-moon, at least her Irish honey-moon, was scarcely well over, when his honour one morning said to me —"Thady, buy me a pig!"—and then the sausages were ordered, and here was the first open breaking out of my lady's troubles. My lady came down herself into the kitchen to speak to the cook about the sausages, and desired never to see them more at her table. Now my master had ordered them, and my lady knew that. The cook took my lady's part, because she never came down into the kitchen, and was young and innocent in house-keeping, which raised her pity; besides, said she, at her own table, surely, my lady should order and disorder what she pleases. But the cook soon changed her note, for my master made it a principle to have the sausages, and swore at her for a Jew herself, till he drove her fairly out of the kitchen; then for fear of her place, and because he threatened that my lady should give her no discharge without the sausages, she gave up, and from that day forward always sausages, or bacon, or pig meat, in some shape or other, went up to table; upon which my lady shut herself up in her own room, and my master said she might stay there, with an oath; and to make sure of her, he turned the key in the door, and kept it ever after in his pocket. We none of us ever saw or heard her speak for seven years after that.* He carried her dinner himself, then his honour had a

* This part of the history of the Rackrent family can scarcely be thought credible: but in justice to honest Thady, it is hoped the reader will recollect

great deal of company to dine with him, and balls in the house, and was as gay and gallant, and as much himself as before he was married; and at dinner he always drank my lady Rackrent's good health, and so did the company, and he sent out always a servant, with his compliments to my Lady Rackrent, and the company was drinking her ladyship's health, and begged to know if there was any thing at table he might send her; and the man came back, after the sham errand, with my Lady Rackrent's compliments, and she was very much obliged to Sir Kit: she did not wish for any thing, but drank the company's health. The country, to be sure, talked and wondered at my lady's being shut up, but nobody chose to interfere, or ask any impertinent questions, for they knew my master was a man very apt to give a short answer himself, and likely to call a man out for it afterwards—he was a famous shot—had killed his man before he came of age, and nobody scarce dared look at him whilst at Bath. Sir Kit's character was so well known in the country, that he lived in peace and quietness ever after, and was a great favourite with the ladies, especially when in process of time, in the fifth year of her confinement, my Lady Rackrent fell ill, and took entirely to her bed, and he gave out that she was now skin

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the history of the celebrated Lady Cathcart's conjugal imprisonment. The Editor was acquainted with Colonel Maguire, Lady Cathcart's husband, he has lately seen and questioned the maid-servant who lived with Colonel Maguire during the time of lady Cathcart's imprisonment. Her ladyship was locked up in her own house for many years; during which period her husband was visited by the neighbouring gentry, and it was his regular custom at dinner to send his compliments to Lady Cathcart, informing her that the company had the honour to drink her Ladyship's health, and begging to know whether there was any thing at table that she would like to eat? the answer was always—"Lady Cathcart's compliments, and she has every thing she wants." An instance of honesty in a poor Irishwoman deserves to be recorded. Lady Cathcart had some remarkably fine diamonds, which she had concealed from her husband, and which she was anxious to get out of the house, lest he should discover them; she had neither servant nor friend to whom she could entrust them; but she had observed a poor beggar-woman who used to come to the house—she spoke to her from the window of the room in which she was confined—the woman promised to do what she desired, and Lady Cathcart threw a parcel, containing the jewels, to her. The poor woman carried them to the person to whom they were directed; and several years afterwards, when Lady Cathcart recovered her liberty, she received her diamonds safely.

At Colonel Maguire's death her Ladyship was released.—The Editor, within this year, saw the gentleman who accompanied her to England after her husband's death. When she first was told of his death, she imagined that the news was not true, and that it was told only with an intention of deceiving her. At his death she had scarcely clothes sufficient to cover her; she wore a red wig, looked scared, and her understanding seemed stupified; she said that she scarcely knew one human creature from another: her imprisonment lasted above twenty years. These circumstances may appear strange to an English reader; but there is no danger in the present times, that any individual should exercise such tyranny as Colonel Maguire's with impunity, the power being now all in the hands of government, and there being no possibility of obtaining from Parliament an act of indemnity for any cruelties.

and bone, and could not last through the winter. In this he had two physicians' opinions to back him (for now he called in two physicans for her,) and tried all his arts to get the diamond cross from her on her death bed, and to get her to make a will in his favour of her separate possessions—but she was there too tough for him. He used to swear at her behind her back, after kneeling to her to her face, and call her in the presence of his gentleman, his stiff-necked Israelite, though before he married her, that same gentleman told me he used to call her (how he could bring it out I don't know!) "my pretty Jessica." To be sure it must have been hard for her to guess what sort of a husband he reckoned to make her. When she was lying, to all expectation, on her death bed, of a broken heart, I could not but pity her, though she was a Jewish; and considering too it was no fault of hers to be taken with my master so young as she was at the Bath, and so fine a gentleman as Sir Kit was when he courted her; and considering too, after all they had heard and seen of him as a husband, there were now no less than three ladies in our county talked of for his second wife, all at daggers drawing with each other, as his gentleman swore, at the balls, for Sir Kit for their partner—I could not but think them bewitched, but they all reasoned with themselves, that Sir Kit would make a good husband to any Christian, but a Jewish, I suppose, and especially as he was now a reformed rake; and it was not known how my lady's fortune was settled in her will, nor how the Castle Rackrent estate was all mortgaged, and bonds out against him, for he was never cured of his gaming tricks—but that was the only fault he had, God bless him!

My lady had a sort of fit, and it was given out, she was dead, by mistake; this brought things to a sad crisis for my poor master—one of the three ladies showed his letters to her brother, and claimed his promises, whilst another did the same. I don't mention names—Sir Kit, in his defence, said he would meet any man who dared to question his conduct, and as to the ladies, they must settle it among them who was to be his second, and his third, and his fourth, whilst his first was still alive to his mortification and theirs. Upon this as upon all former occasions, he had the voice of the country with him, on account of the great spirit and propriety he acted with. He met and shot the first lady's brother—the next day he called out the second, who had a wooden leg, and their place of meeting by appointment being in a new ploughed field, the wooden leg man stuck fast in it. Sir Kit seeing his situation, with great candour fired his pistol over his head, upon which the seconds interposed, and convinced the parties there had been a slight misunderstanding between them;

thereupon they shook hands cordially, and went home to dinner together. This gentleman to show the world how they stood together, and by the advice of the friends of both parties to re-establish his sister's injured reputation, went out with Sir Kit as his second, and carried his message next day to the last of his adversaries. I never saw him in such fine spirits as that day he went out—sure enough he was within aims-ace of getting quit handsomely of all his enemies; but unluckily after hitting the tooth-pick out of his adversary's finger and thumb, he received a ball in a vital part, and was brought home, in little better than an hour after the affair, speechless, on a hand-barrow, to my lady; we got the key out of his pocket the first thing we did, and my son Jason ran to unlock the barrack room, where my lady had been shut up for seven years, to acquaint her with the fatal accident. The surprise bereaved her of her senses at first, nor would she believe but we were putting some new trick upon her to entrap her out of her jewels, for a great while, till Jason bethought himself of taking her to the window, and showed her the men bringing Sir Kit up the avenue upon the hand-barrow, which had immediately the desired effect; for directly she burst into tears, and pulling her cross from her bosom, she kissed it with as great devotion as ever I witnessed, and lifting up her eyes to Heaven, uttered some ejaculation, which none present heard—but I take the sense of it to be, she returned thanks for this unexpected interposition in her favour, when she had least reason to expect it. My master was greatly lamented—there was no life in him when we lifted him off the barrow, so he was laid out immediately and *waked* the same night. The country was all in an uproar about him, and not a soul but cried shame upon his murderer, who would have been hanged surely, if he could have been brought to his trial, whilst the gentlemen in the country were up about it, but he very prudently withdrew himself to the continent before the affair was made public. As for the young lady who was the immediate cause of the fatal accident, however innocently, she could never show her head after at the balls in the county or any place, and by the advice of her friends and physicians she was ordered soon after to Bath, where it was expected, if any where on this side of the grave, she would meet with the recovery of her health and lost peace of mind. As a proof of his great popularity, I need only add, that there was a song made upon my master's untimely death in the newspapers, which was in every body's mouth, singing up and down through the country, even down to the mountains, only three days after his unhappy exit.—He was also greatly bemoaned at the Curragh, where his cattle were well known, and all who had taken up his bets formerly were particularly

inconsolable for his loss to society.—His stud sold at the cant at the greatest price ever known in the county; his favourite horses were chiefly disposed of amongst his particular friends, who would give any price for them for his sake; but no ready money was required by the new heir, who wished not to displease any of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood just upon his coming to settle amongst them; so a long credit was given where requisite, and the cash has never been gathered in from that day to this.

But to return to my lady.—She got surprisingly well after my master's decease. No sooner was it known for certain that he was dead, than all the gentlemen within twenty miles of us came in a body as it were to set my lady at liberty, and to protest against her confinement, which they now for the first time understood was against her own consent. The ladies too were as attentive as possible, striving who should be foremost with their morning visits; and they that saw the diamonds spoke very handsomely of them, but thought it a pity they were not bestowed, if it had so pleased God, upon a lady who would have become them better. All these civilities wrought little with my lady, for she had taken an unaccountable prejudice against the country and every thing belonging to it, and was so partial to her native land, that after parting with the cook, which she did immediately upon my master's decease, I never knew her easy one instant, night or day, but when she was packing up to leave us. Had she meant to make any stay in Ireland, I stood a great chance of being a great favourite with her, for when she found I understood the weather-cock, she was always finding some pretence to be talking to me, and asking me which way the wind blew, and was it likely, did I think, to continue fair for England.—But when I saw she had made up her mind to spend the rest of her days upon her own income and jewels in England, I considered her quite as a foreigner, and not at all any longer as part of the family. She gave no vails to the servants at Castle Rackrent at parting, notwithstanding the old proverb of "*as rich as a Jew*," which, she being a Jewish, they built upon with reason—But from first to last she brought nothing but misfortunes amongst us; and if it had not been all along with her, his honour Sir Kit would have been now alive in all appearance.—Her diamond cross was, they say, at the bottom of it all; and it was a shame for her, being his wife, not to show more duty, and to have given it up when he condescended to ask so often for such a bit of a trifle in his distresses, especially when he all along made it no secret he married for money. But we will not bestow another thought upon her—This much I thought it lay upon my conscience to say, in justice to my poor master's memory.

'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody no good—the same wind that took the Jew Lady Rackrent over to England brought over the new heir to Castle Rackrent.

Here let me pause for breath in my story, for though I had a great regard for every member of the family, yet without compare Sir Conolly, commonly called for short amongst his friends Sir Condy Rackrent, was ever my great favourite, and indeed the most universally beloved man I had ever seen or heard of, not excepting his great ancestor Sir Patrick, to whose memory he, amongst other instances of generosity, erected a handsome marble stone in the church of Castle Rackrent, setting forth in large letters his age, birth, parentage, and many other virtues, concluding with the compliment so justly due, that "Sir Patrick Rackrent lived and died a monument of old Irish hospitality."

CONTINUATION OF THE MEMOIRS

OF THE

RACKRENT FAMILY.

HISTORY OF SIR CONOLLY RACKRENT.

Sir Condy Rackrent, by the grace of God, heir at law to the Castle Rackrent estate, was a remote branch of the family: born to little or no fortune of his own, he was bred to the bar, at which having many friends to push him, and no mean natural abilities of his own, he doubtless would, in process of time, if he could have borne the drudgery of that study, have been rapidly made king's counsel at the least—But things were disposed of otherwise, and he never went the circuit but twice, and then made no figure for want of a fee, and being unable to speak in public. He received his education chiefly in the college of Dublin; but before he came to years of discretion, lived in the country, in a small but slated house, within view of the end of the avenue. I remember him barefooted and headed, running through the street of O'Shaughlin's town, and playing at pitch and toss, ball, marbles, and what not, with the boys of the town, amongst whom my son Jason was a great favourite with him. As for me, he was ev-

er my white-headed boy*—often's the time when I would call in at his father's, where I was always made welcome, he would slip down to me in the kitchen, and love to sit on my knee whilst I told him stories of the family and the blood from which he was sprung, and how he might look forward, if the *then* present man should die without childer, to being at the head of the Castle Rackrent estate.—This was then spoke quite and clear at random to please the child, but it pleased Heaven to accomplish my prophecy afterwards, which gave him a great opinion of my judgment in business. He went to a little grammar school with many others, and my son amongst the rest, who was in his class, and not a little useful to him in his book learning, which he acknowledged with gratitude ever after. These rudiments of his education thus completed, he got a horseback, to which exercise he was ever addicted, and used to gallop over the country whilst yet but a slip of a boy, under the care of Sir Kit's huntsman, who was very fond of him, and often lent him his gun and took him out a shooting under his own eye.—By these means he became well acquainted and popular amongst the poor in the neighbourhood early, for there was not a cabin at which he had not stopped some morning or other along with the huntsman, to drink a glass of burnt whiskey out of an egg-shell, to do him good and warm his heart, and drive the cold out of his stomach. The old people always told him he was a great likeness of Sir Patrick, which made him first have an ambition to take after him, as far as his fortune should allow. He left us when of an age to enter the college, and there completed his education and nineteenth year; for as he was not born to an estate, his friends thought it incumbent on them to give him the best education which could be had for love or money, and a great deal of money consequently was spent upon him at college and Temple—He was very little altered for the worse, by what he saw there of the great world, for when he came down into the country to pay us a visit we thought him just the same man as ever, hand and glove with every one, and as far from high, though not without his own proper share of family pride, as any man ever you see. Latterly, seeing how Sir Kit and the *Jewish* lived together, and that there was no one between him and the Castle Rackrent estate, he neglected to apply to the law as much as was expected of him, and secretly many of the tenants, and others, advanced him cash upon his note of hand value received, promising bargains of leases and lawful interest should he ever

* *White-headed boy*—is used by the Irish as an expression of fondness—It is upon a par with the English term *crony*.—We are at a loss for the derivation of this term.

come into the estate.—All this was kept a great secret, for fear the present man hearing of it should take it into his head to take it ill of poor Condy, and so should cut him off for ever by levying a fine, and suffering a recovery to dock the entail—Sir Murtagh would have been the man for that, but Sir Kit was too much taken up philandering to consider the law in this case—or any other.—These practices I have mentioned account for the state of his affairs, I mean Sir Condy's, upon his coming into the Castle Rackrent estate.—He could not command a penny of his first year's income, which, and keeping no accounts, and the great sight of company he did, with many other causes too numerous to mention, was the origin of his distresses.—My son Jason, who was now established agent, and knew every thing, explained matters out of the face to Sir Conolly, and made him sensible of his embarrassed situation. With a great nominal rent roll, it was almost all paid away in interest, which being for convenience suffered to run on, soon doubled the principal, and Sir Condy was obligated to pass new bonds for the interest, now grown principal, and so on. Whilst this was going on, my son requiring to be paid for his trouble, and many years service in the family gratis, and Sir Condy not willing to take his affairs into his own hands, or to look them even in the face, he gave my son a bargain of some acres which fell out of lease at a reasonable rent; Jason set the land as soon as his lease was sealed to undertenants, to make the rent, and got two hundred a year profit rent, which was little enough, considering his long agency.—He bought the land at twelve years purchase, two years afterwards, when Sir Condy was pushed for money on an execution, and was at the same time allowed for his improvements thereon. There was a sort of hunting lodge upon the estate convenient to my son Jason's land, which he had his eye upon about this time; and he was a little jealous of Sir Condy, who talked of setting it to a stranger, who was just come into the country—Captain Moneygawl was the man; he was son and heir to the Moneygawls of Mount Juliet's town, who had a great estate in the next county to ours, and my master was loth to disoblige the young gentleman, whose heart was set upon the lodge; so he wrote him back that the lodge was at his service, and if he would honour him with his company at Castle Rackrent, they could ride over together some morning and look at it before signing the lease. Accordingly the Captain came over to us, and he and Sir Condy grew the greatest friends ever you see, and were for ever out a shooting or hunting together, and were very merry in the evenings, and Sir Condy was invited of course to Mount Juliet's town, and the family intimacy that had been in Sir Patrick's time was now recollected, and nothing would serve Sir

Condy but he must be three times a week at the least with his new friends—which grieved me, who knew by the Captain's groom and gentleman how they talked of him at Mount Juliet's town, making him quite, as one may say, a laughing stock and a butt for the whole company: but they were soon cured of *that* by an accident that surprised 'em not a little, as it did me. There was a bit of a scrawl I found upon the waiting maid of old Mr. Moneygawl's youngest daughter Miss Isabella, that laid open the whole; and her father, they say, was like one out of his right mind, and swore it was the last thing he ever should have thought of when he invited my master to his house, that his daughter should think of such a match. But their talk signified not a straw; for as Miss Isabella's maid reported, her young mistress was fallen over head and ears in love with Sir Condy, from the first time that ever her brother brought him into the house to dinner; the servant who waited that day behind my master's chair was the first who knew it, as he says; though it's hard to believe him, for he did not tell till a great while afterwards; but however, it's likely enough as the thing turned out that he was not far out of the way; for towards the middle of dinner, as he says, they were talking of stage plays, having a play house, and being great play actors at Mount Juliet's town, and Miss Isabella turns short to my master and says—"Have you seen the playbill, Sir Condy?"—"No, I have not," said he.—"Then more shame for you," said the Captain her brother, "not to know that my sister is to play Juliet to-night, who plays it better than any woman on or off the stage in all Ireland."—"I am very happy to hear it," said Sir Condy, and there the matter dropped for the present; but Sir Condy all this time, and a great while afterwards, was at a terrible nonplus, for he had no liking, not he, to stage plays, nor to Miss Isabella either: to his mind, as it came out over a bowl of whiskey punch at home, his little Judy M'Quirk, who was daughter to a sister's son of mine, was worth twenty of Miss Isabella.—He had seen her often when he stopped at her father's cabin to drink whiskey out of the egg-shell, out of hunting, before he came to the estate, and as she gave out, was under something like a promise of marriage to her. Any how, I could not but pity my poor master, who was so bothered between them, and he an easy hearted man that could not disoblige nobody, God bless him. To be sure it was not his place to behave ungenerous to Miss Isabella, who had disobliged all her relations for his sake, as he remarked; and then she was locked up in her chamber and forbid to think of him any more, which raised his spirit, because his family was, as he observed, as good as theirs at any rate, and the Rackrents a suitable match for the Moneygawls any day in the year; all which was true

enough; but it grieved me to see that upon the strength of all this, Sir Condy was growing more in the mind to carry off Miss Isabella to Scotland, in spite of her relations, as she desired.

"It's all over with our poor Judy!" said I, with a heavy sigh, making bold to speak to him one night when he was a little cheerful, and standing in the servant's hall all alone with me, as was often his custom—"Not at all," said he, "I never was fonder of Judy than at this present speaking, and to prove it to you," said he, and he took from my hand a halfpenny, change that I had just got along with my tobacco; "and to prove it to you, Thady, says he, it's a toss up with me which I should marry this minute, her or Mr. Moneygawl of Mount Juliet's Town's daughter—so it is"—"Oh, boo! boo!*" says I, making light of it, to see what he would go on to next—"your honour's joking, to be sure, there, no compare between our poor Judy and Miss Isabella, who has a great fortune, they say."—"I'm not a man to mind a fortune, nor never was, said Sir Condy proudly, whatever her friends may say; and to make short of it, says he I'm come to a determination upon the spot;" with that he swore such a terrible oath, as made me† cross myself, "and by this book, said he, snatching up my ballad book, mistaking it up for my prayer-book, which lay in the window—and by this book, said he, and by all the books that ever were shut and opened—it's come to a toss up with me, and I'll stand or fall by the toss, and so Thady, hand me over that‡ *pin* out of the ink-horn," and he makes a cross on the smooth side of the halfpenny—"Judy M'Quirk, said he, her mark,"§ God bless him! his hand was a little unsteadied by all the whiskey punch he had taken, but it was plain to see his heart was for poor Judy.—My heart was all as one as in my mouth, when I saw the halfpenny up in the air, but I said nothing at all, and when it came down, I was glad I had kept myself to myself, for to be sure now it was all over with poor Judy. "Judy's out of luck," said I, striving to laugh—"I'm out of luck," said he, and I never saw a

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* *Boo! Boo!* an exclamation equivalent to *Pshaw!* or *Nonsense.*

† *As made me cross myself*—The Roman Catholics.

‡ *Pin* read *Pen*—it formerly was vulgarly pronounced *pin* in Ireland.

§ *Her mark*—It was the custom in Ireland for those who could not write, to make a cross to stand for their signature, as was formerly the practice of our English monarchs.—The Editor inserts the fac simile of an Irish *mark*, which may hereafter be valuable to a judicious antiquary—

Her
Judy + M'Quirk
Mark.

In bonds or notes, signed in this manner, a witness is requisite, as the name is frequently written by him or her.

man look so cast down; he took up the halfpenny off the flag, and walked away quite sobered like by the shock. Now though as easy a man you would think as any in the wide world, there was no such thing as making him unsay one of these sort of vows,* which he had learned to reverence when young, as I well remember teaching him to toss up for bog berries on my knee. So I saw the affair was as good as settled between him and Miss Isabella, and I had no more to say but to wish her joy, which I did the week afterwards upon her return from Scotland with my poor master.

My new lady was young, as might be supposed of a lady that had been carried off by her own consent to Scotland, but I could only see her at first through her veil, which from bashfulness or fashion, she kept over her face. "And am I to walk through all this crowd of people, my dearest love," said she to Sir Condy, meaning us servants and tenants, who had gathered at the back gate—"My dear," said Sir Condy, "there's nothing for it but to walk, or let me carry you as far as the house, for you see the back road's too narrow for a carriage, and the great piers have tumbled down across the front approach, so there's no driving the right way by reason of the ruins."—"Plato, thou reasonest well!" said she, or words to that effect, which I could no ways understand; and again, when her foot stumbled against a broken bit of a car wheel, she cried out—"Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!"—Well, thought I, to be sure if she's no Jewish like the last, she is a mad woman for certain, which is as bad: it would have been as well for my poor master to have taken up with poor Judy, who is in her right mind any how.

She was dressed like a mad woman, moreover, more than like any one I ever saw afore or since, and I could not take my eyes off her, but still followed behind her, and her feathers on the top of her hat were broke going in at the low back door, and she pulled out her little bottle out of her pocket to smell to when she found herself in the kitchen, and said, "I shall faint with the heat of this odious, odious place."—"My dear, it's only three steps across the kitchen, and there's a fine air if your veil was up," said Sir Condy, and with that threw back her veil, so that I had then a full sight of her face; she

* *Vows*—It has been maliciously and unjustly hinted, that the lower classes of the people in Ireland pay but little regard to oaths; yet it is certain that some oaths or vows have great power over their minds. Sometimes they swear they will be revenged on some of their neighbours; this is an oath they are never known to break. But what is infinitely more extraordinary and unaccountable, they sometimes make a vow against whiskey; these vows are usually limited to a short time. A woman who has a drunken husband is most fortunate if she can prevail upon him to go to the priest and make a vow against whiskey for a year, or a month, or a week, or a day.

had not at all the colour of one going to faint, but a fine complexion of her own, as I then took it to be, though her maid told me after it was all put on; but even complexion and all taken in, she was no way, in point of good looks, to compare to poor Judy; and with all she had a quality toss with her; but may be it was my over partiality to Judy, into whose place I may say she stept, that made me notice all this. To do her justice, however, she was, when we came to know her better, very liberal in her house-keeping, nothing at all of the Skinflint in her; she left every thing to the house-keeper, and her own maid, Mrs. Jane, who went with her to Scotland, gave her the best of characters for generosity; she seldom or ever wore a thing twice the same way; Mrs. Jane told us, and was always pulling her things to pieces, and giving them away, never being used in her father's house to think of expense in any thing—and she reckoned to be sure, to go on the same way at Castle Rackrent; but when I came to inquire, I learned that her father was so mad with her for running off after his locking her up, and forbidding her to think any more of Sir Condy, that he would not give her a farthing; and it was lucky for her she had a few thousands of her own, which had been left to her by a good grandmother, and these were very convenient to begin with. My master and my lady set out in great style; they had the finest coach and chariot, and horses and liveries, and cut the greatest dash in the county, returning their wedding visits!—and it was immediately reported that her father had undertaken to pay all my master's debts, and of course all his tradesmen gave him a new credit, and every thing went on smack smooth, and I could not but admire my lady's spirit, and was proud to see Castle Rackrent again in all its glory. My lady had a fine taste for building, and furniture, and play-houses, and she turned every thing topsy-turvy, and made the barrack-room into a theatre, as she called it, and she went on as if she had a mint of money at her elbow; and to be sure I thought she knew best, especially as Sir Condy said nothing to it one way or the other. All he asked, God bless him! was to live in peace and quietness, and have his bottle, or his whiskey punch at night to himself. Now this was little enough, to be sure, for any gentleman, but my lady couldn't abide the smell of whiskey punch.—"My dear," says he, "you liked it well enough before we were married, and why not now?"—"My dear," said she, "I never smelt it, or I assure you I should never have prevailed upon myself to marry you."—"My dear, I am sorry you did not smell it, but we can't help that now," returned my master, without putting himself in a passion, or going out of his way, but just fair and easy helped himself to another glass, and drank it off to her good health. All this

the butler told me, who was going backwards and forwards unnoticed with the jug, and hot water and sugar, and all he thought wanting. Upon my master's swallowing the last glass of whiskey punch, my lady burst into tears, calling him an ungrateful, base, barbarous wretch! and went off into a fit of hysterics, as I think Mrs. Jane called it, and my poor master was greatly frightened, this being the first thing of the kind he had seen; and he fell straight on his knees before her, and, like a good-hearted cratur as he was, ordered the whiskey punch out of the room, and bid 'em throw open all the windows, and cursed himself, and then my lady came to herself again, and when she saw him kneeling there, bid him get up, and not forswear himself any more, for that she was sure he did not love her, nor never had; this we learnt from Mrs. Jane who was the only person left present at all this—"My dear," returns my master, thinking to be sure of Judy, as well he might, "whoever told you so is an incendiary, and I'll have 'em turned out of the house this minute, if you'll only let me know which of them it was."—"Told me what?" says my lady, starting upright, in her chair. "Nothing, nothing at all," said my master, seeing he had overshot himself, and that my lady spoke at random, "but what you said just now that I did not love you, Bella, who told you that?"—"My own sense," said she, and she put her handkerchief to her face, and leant back upon Mrs. Jane, and fell to sobbing as if her heart would break. "Why now, Bella, this is very strange of you," said my poor master, "if nobody has told you nothing, what is it you are taking on for at this rate, and exposing yourself and me for this way?"—"Oh, say no more, say no more, every word you say kills me," cried my lady, and she ran on like one, as Mrs. Jane says, raving—"Oh, Sir Condy, Sir Condy! I that had hoped to find in you"——"Why now faith this is a little too much; do, Bella, try to recollect yourself, my dear; am I not your husband, and of your own choosing, and is not that enough?"—"Oh, too much! too much!" cried my lady, wringing her hands. "Why, my dear, come to your right senses for the love of Heaven—see, is not the whiskey punch, jug, and bowl, and all, gone out of the room long ago? what is it in the wide world you have to complain of?" But still my lady sobbed and sobbed, and called herself the most wretched of women; and among other out of the way provoking things, asked my master, was he fit company for her, and he drinking all night. This nettling him, which it was hard to do, he replied, that as to drinking all night, he was then as sober as she was herself, and that it was no matter how much a man drank, provided it did no ways affect or stagger him; that as to being fit company for her, he thought himself of a family to be fit company for any lord or lady in the land, but that he never prevented her from seeing and keeping what company

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she pleased, and that he had done his best to make Castle Rackrent pleasing to her since her marriage, having always had the house full of visiters, and if her own relations were not amongst them, he said, that was their own fault, and their pride's fault, of which he was sorry to find her ladyship had so unbecoming a share—So concluding, he took his candle and walked off to his room, and my lady was in her tantrums for three days after, and would have been so much longer, no doubt, but some of her friends, young ladies, and cousins, and second cousins, came to Castle Rackrent, by my poor master's express invitation, to see her, and she was in a hurry to get up, as Mrs. Jane called it, a play for them, and so got well, and was as finely dressed and as happy to look at as ever, and all the young ladies who used to be in her room dressing of her, said in Mrs. Jane's hearing, that my lady was the happiest bride ever they had seen, and that to be sure a love match was the only thing for happiness, where the parties could any way afford it.

As to affording it, God knows it was little they knew of the matter; my lady's few thousands could not last for ever, especially the way she went on with them, and letters from tradesfolk came every post thick and threefold, with bills as long as my arm, of years and years standing, my son Jason had 'em all handed over to him, and the pressing letters were all unread by Sir Condy, who hated trouble, and could never be brought to hear talk of business, but still put it off, and put it off, saying—settle it any how, or bid 'em call again to-morrow, or speak to me about it some other time. Now, it was hard to find the right time to speak, for in the mornings he was abed, and in the evenings over his bottle, where no gentleman chooses to be disturbed.—Things in a twelvemonth or so came to such a pass, there was no making a shift to go on any longer, though we were all of us well enough used to live from hand to mouth at Castle Rackrent. One day, I remember, when there was a power of company, all sitting after dinner in the dusk, not to say dark, in the drawing-room, my lady having rung five times for candles, and none to go up, the house-keeper sent up the footman, who went to my mistress and whispered behind her chair how it was. "My lady," says he, "there are no candles in the house." "Bless me," says she, "then take a horse and gallop off as fast as you can to Carrick O'Fungus and get some." "And in the mean time tell them to step into the play-house, and try if there are not some bits left," added Sir Condy, who happened to be within hearing. The man was sent up again to my lady, to let her know there was no horse to go but one that wanted a shoe. "Go to Sir Condy, then, I know nothing at all about the horses," said my lady, "why do you plague me with these things?" How it was settled I really forget, but to the best of

my remembrance, the boy was sent down to my son Jason's to borrow candles for the night. Another time, in the winter, and on a desperate cold day, there was no turf in for the parlour and above stairs, and scarce enough for the cook in the kitchen, the little *gossoon** was sent off to the neighbours to see and beg or borrow some, but none could he bring back with him for love or money; so as needs must we were forced to trouble Sir Condy—"Well, and if there's no turf to be had in the town or country, why what signifies talking any more about it, can't ye go and cut down a tree?"—"Which tree, please your honour?" I made bold to say. "Any tree at all that's good to burn," said Sir Condy; "send off smart, and get one down, and the fires lighted before my lady gets up to breakfast, or the house will be too hot to hold us." He was always very considerate in all things about my lady, and she wanted for nothing whilst he had it to give.—Well, when things were tight with them about this time, my son Jason put in a word again about the lodge, and made a genteel offer to lay down the purchase money to relieve Sir Condy's distresses.—Now Sir Condy had it from the best authority, that there were two writs come down to the Sheriff against his person, and the Sheriff, as ill luck would have it, was no friend of his, and talked how he must do his duty, and how he would do it, if it was against the first man in the county, or even his own brother, let alone one who had voted against him at the last election, as Sir Condy had done.—So Sir Condy was fain to take the purchase money of the lodge from my son Jason to settle matters; and sure enough it was a good bargain for both parties, for my son bought the fee simple of a good house for him and his heirs for ever for little or nothing, and by selling of it for that same my master saved himself from a gaol. Every way it turned out fortunate for Sir Condy: for before the money was all gone there came a general election, and he being so well beloved in the county, and one of the oldest families, no one had a better right to stand candidate for the vacancy; and he was called upon by all his friends, and the whole county I may say, to declare himself against the old member, who had little thought of a contest. My master did not relish the thoughts of a troublesome canvass, and all the ill will he might bring upon himself by disturbing the peace of the county, besides the expense which was no trifle; but all his friends called upon one another to subscribe, and formed themselves into a committee, and wrote all his circular letters for him, and engaged all his agents, and did all the busi-

* *Gossoon*—A little boy—from the French word *garçon*. In most Irish families there *used* to be a barefooted Gossoon, who was slave to the cook and the butler, and who in fact without wages, did all the hard work of the house. —Gossoons were always employed as messengers. The Editor has known a gossoon to go on foot, without shoes or stockings, fifty-one English miles between sun-rise and *sun-set*.

ness unknown to him, and he was well pleased that it should be so at last, and my lady herself was very sanguine about the election, and there was open house kept night and day at Castle Rackrent, and I thought I never saw my lady look so well in my life as she did at that time; there were grand dinners, and all the gentlemen drinking success to Sir Condy till they were carried off; and then dances and balls, and the ladies all finishing with a raking pot of tea in the morning. Indeed it was well the company made it their choice to sit up all nights, for there was not half beds enough for the sights of people that were in it, though there were shake downs in the drawing-room always made up before sun-rise, for those that liked it. For my part, when I saw the doings that were going on, and the loads of claret that went down the throats of them that had no right to be asking for it, and the sights of meat that went up to table and never came down, besides what was carried off to one or t'other below stairs, I couldn't but pity my poor master who was to pay for all, but I said nothing for fear of gaining myself ill will. The day of election will come some time or other, says I to myself, and all will be over—and so it did, and a glorious day it was as any I ever had the happiness to see; "Huzza! huzza! Sir Condy Rackrent for ever," was the first thing I hears in the morning, and the same and nothing else all day, and not a soul sober only just when polling, enough to give their votes as became 'em, and to stand the brow beating of the lawyers who came tight enough upon us; and many of our freeholders were knocked off, having never a freehold that they could safely swear to, and Sir Condy was not willing to have any man perjure himself for his sake; as was done on the other side, God knows, but no matter for that. Some of our friends were dumb-founded, by the lawyers asking them, Had they ever been upon the ground where their freeholds lay? Now Sir Condy being tender of the consciences of them that had not been on the ground, and so could not swear to a freehold when cross-examined by them lawyers, sent out for a couple of cleaves-full of the sods of his farm of Gulteeshinnagh;* and as soon as the sods came into town he set each man upon his sod, and so then ever after, you know, they could fairly swear they had been upon the ground.† We gained the day by this piece of honesty.—I thought I should have died in the streets for joy when I seed my poor master chaired, and he

* At St. Patrick's meeting, London, March 1806, the Duke of Sussex said, he had the honour of bearing an Irish title, and, with the permission of the company, he should tell them an anecdote of what he had experienced on his travels. When he was at Rome, he went to visit an Irish Seminary, and when they heard who he was, and that he had an Irish title, some of them asked him, "Please your Royal Highness, since you are an Irish Peer, will you tell us if you ever trod upon Irish ground?" When he told them he had not, "O! then," said one of the Order, "you shall soon do so." They then spread some earth, which had been brought from Ireland on a marble slab, and made him stand upon it.

† This was actually done at an election in Ireland.

bare-headed and it raining as hard as it could pour;—but all the crowds following him up and down, and he bowing and shaking hands with the whole town.—"Is that Sir Condy Rackrent in the chair?" says a stranger man in the crowd—"The same," says I—"who else should it be? God bless him!"—"And I take it then you belong to him," says he,—"Not at all," says I, "but I live under him, and have done so these two hundred years and upwards, me and mine." "It's lucky for you, then," rejoins he, "that he is where he is, for was he any where else but in the chair this minute he'd be in a worse place, for I was sent down on purpose to put him up,* and here's my order for so doing in my pocket." It was a writ that villain the wine merchant had marked against my poor master, for some hundreds of an old debt which it was a shame to be talking of at such a time as this. "Put it in your pocket again, and think no more of it any ways for seven years to come, my honest friend," says I, "he's a member a Parliament now, praised be God, and such as you can't touch him; and if you'll take a fool's advice, I'd have you keep out of the way this day, or you'll run a good chance of getting your deserts amongst my master's friends, unless you choose to drink his health, like every body else." "I've no objection to that in life," said he: so we went into one of the public houses kept open for my master, and we had a great deal of talk about this thing and that, and "how is it," says he, "your master keeps on so well upon his legs; I heard say he was off Holantide twelvemonth past."—"Never was better or heartier in his life," said I. "It's not that I'm after speaking of," said he, "but there was a great report of his being ruined." "No matter," says I, "the Sheriffs two years running were his particular friends, and the Sub-Sheriffs were both of them gentlemen, and were properly spoken to; and so the writs lay snug with them, and they, as I understand by my son Jason the custom in them cases is, returned the writs as they came to them to those that sent 'em, much good may it do them, with a word in Latin that no such person as Sir Condy Rackrent, Bart. was to be found in those parts."

"Oh, I understand all those ways better, no offence, than you," says he, laughing, and at the same time filling his glass to my master's good health, which convinced me he was a warm friend in his heart after all, though appearances were a little suspicious or so at first.—"To be sure," says he, still cutting his joke, "when a man's over head and shoulders in debt, he may live the faster for it, and the better if he goes the right way about it—or else how is it that so many live on so well, as we see every day, after they are ruined?"—"How

* *To put him up*—To put him in gaol.

is it," says I, being a little merry at the time, "how is it but just as you see the ducks in the chicken yard just after their heads are cut off by the cook, running round and round faster than when alive."—At which conceit he fell a laughing, and remarked he had never had the happiness yet to see the chicken yard at Castle Rackrent. "It won't be long so, I hope," says I, "you'll be kindly welcome there, as every body is made by my master; there is not a freer spoken gentleman, or a better beloved, high or low, in all Ireland." And of what passed after this I'm not sensible, for we drank Sir Condy's good health, and the downfal of his enemies, till we could stand no longer ourselves. And little did I think at the time, or till long after, how I was harbouring my poor master's greatest of enemies myself. This fellow had the impudence, after coming to see the chicken-yard, to get me to introduce him to my son Jason; little more than the man that never was born did I guess at his meaning by this visit; he gets him a correct list fairly drawn out from my son Jason of all my master's debts, and goes straight round to the creditors, and buys them all up, which he did easy enough, seeing the half of them never expected to see their money out of Sir Condy's hands. Then when this base-minded limb of the law, as I afterwards detected him in being, grew to be sole creditor over all, he takes him out a custodiam on all the denominations and sub-denominations, and every carton and half carton upon the estate, and not content with that, must have an execution against the master's goods, and down to the furniture, though little worth, of Castle Rackrent itself. But this is a part of my story, I'm not come to yet, and it's bad to be forestalling; ill news flies fast enough all the world over. To go back to the day of the election, which I never think of but with pleasure and tears of gratitude for those good times; after the election was quite and clean over, there comes shoals of people from all parts, claiming to have obliged my master with their votes, and putting him in mind of promises which he could never remember himself to have made; one was to have a freehold for each of his four sons—another was to have a renewal of a lease—another an abatement—one came to be paid ten guineas for a pair of silver buckles sold my master on the hustings, which turned out to be no better than copper gilt—another had a long bill for oats, the half of which never went into the granary, to my certain knowledge, and the other half were not fit for the cattle to touch; but the bargain was made the week before the election, and the coach and saddle horses were got into order for the day, besides a vote fairly got by them oats—so no more reasoning on that head. But then there was no end to them that were telling Sir Condy he had engaged to make their sons excisemen, or high consta-

bles, or the like; and as for them that had bills to give in for liquor, and beds, and straw, and ribands, and horses, and post-chaises for the gentlemen freeholders that came from all parts and other counties to vote for my master, and were not, to be sure, to be at any charges, there was no standing against all these; and worse than all, the gentlemen of my master's committee, who managed all for him, and talked how they'd bring him in without costing him a penny, and subscribed by hundreds very genteelly forgot to pay their subscriptions, and had laid out in agents and lawyers, fees and secret service money, the Lord knows how much, and my master could never ask one of them for their subscription you are sensible, nor for the price of a fine horse he had sold one of them, so it all was left at his door. He could never, God bless him again, I say, bring himself to ask a gentleman for money, despising such sort of conversation himself; but others who were not gentlemen born, behaved very uncivil in pressing him at this very time, and all he could do to content 'em all, was to take himself out of the way as fast as possible to Dublin, where my lady had taken a house fitting for him, as a Member of Parliament, to attend his duty in there all the winter. —I was very lonely when the whole family was gone, and all the things they had ordered to go and forgot sent after them by the stage. There was then a great silence in Castle Rackrent, and I went moping from room to room, hearing the doors clap for want of right locks, and the wind through the broken windows, that the glazier never would come to mend, and the rain coming through the roof and best ceilings all over the house, for want of the slater, whose bill was not paid; besides our having no slates or shingles for that part of the old building which was shingled, and burnt when the chimney took fire, and had been open to the weather ever since. I took myself to the servant's hall in the evening to smoke my pipe as usual, but missed the bit of talk we used to have there sadly, and ever after was content to stay in the kitchen and boil my little potatoes,* and put up my bed there; and every post day I looked in the newspaper, but no news of my master in the house.—He never spoke good or bad—but, as the butler wrote down word to my son Jason, was very ill used by the government about a place that was promised him and never given, after his supporting them against his conscience very honourably, and being greatly abused for it, which hurt him greatly, he having the name of a great patriot

* *My little potatoes*—Thady does not mean by this expression that his potatoes were less than other people's, or less than the usual size—*little* is here used only as an Italian diminutive, expressive of fondness.

in the country before. The house and living in Dublin too were not to be had for nothing, and my son Jason said Sir Condy must soon be looking out for a new agent, for I've done my part and can do no more; if my lady had the bank of Ireland to spend, it would go all in one winter, and Sir Condy would never gainsay her, though he does not care the rind of a lemon for her all the while.

Now I could not bear to hear Jason giving out after this manner against the family, and twenty people standing by in the street. Ever since he had lived at the Lodge of his own, he looked down, howsomever, upon poor old Thady, and was grown quite a great gentleman, and had none of his relations near him—no wonder he was no kinder to poor Sir Condy than to his own kith or kin.* In the spring it was the villain got the list of the debts from him brought down the Custodiam, Sir Condy still attending his duty in Parliament; and I could scarcely believe my own old eyes, or the spectacles with which I read it, when I was shewn my son Jason's name joined in the Custodiam; but he told me it was only for form's sake, and to make things easier, than if all the land was under the power of a total stranger. Well, I did not know what to think—it was hard to be talking ill of my own, and I could not but grieve for my poor master's fine estate, all torn by these vultures of the law; so I said nothing, but just looked on to see how it would all end.

It was not till the month of June that he and my lady came down to the country. My master was pleased to take me aside with him to the brew-house that same evening, to complain to me of my son, and other matters, in which he said he was confident I had neither art nor part; he said a great deal more to me, to whom he had been fond to talk ever since he was my white-headed boy before he came to the estate, and all that he said about poor Judy I can never forget, but scorn to repeat. He did not say an unkind word to my lady, but wondered, as well he might, her relations would do nothing for him or her, and they in all this great distress. He did not take any thing long to heart, let it be as it would, and had no more malice or thought of the like in him than the child that can't speak; this night it was all out of his head before he went to his bed. He took his jug of whiskey punch—My lady was grown quite easy about the whiskey punch by this time, and so I did suppose all was going on right betwixt them, till I learnt the truth through Mrs. Jane who talked over their affairs to the house-keeper, and I within hearing. The night my master came home, thinking of nothing at all, but

* *Kith and kin*—family or relations—*Kin* from *kind*—*Kith* from——we know not what.

just making merry, he drank his bumper toast "to the deserts of that old curmudgeon my father-in-law, and all enemies at Mount Juliet's town." Now my lady was no longer in the mind she formerly was, and did no ways relish hearing her own friends abused in her presence, she said, "Then why don't they show themselves your friends," said my master, "and oblige me with the loan of the money I condescended, by your advice, my dear, to ask?—It's now three posts since I sent off my letter, desiring in the postscript a speedy answer by the return of the post, and no account at all from them yet." "I expect they'll write to *me* next post," says my lady, and that was all that passed then; but it was easy from this to guess there was a coolness betwixt them, and with good cause.

The next morning being post day, I sent off the gossoon early to the post-office to see was there any letter likely to set matters to rights, and he brought back one with the proper post-mark upon it, sure enough, and I had no time to examine, or make any conjecture more about it, for into the servants' hall pops Mrs. Jane with a blue bandbox in her hand, quite entirely mad. "Dear Ma'am, and what's the matter?" says I, "Matter enough," says she, "don't you see my bandbox is wet through, and my best bonnet here spoiled, besides my lady's, and all by the rain coming in through that gallery window, that you might have got mended if you'd had any sense, Thady, all the time we were in town in the winter." "Sure I could not get the glazier, Ma'am," says I. "You might have stopped it up any how," says she. "So I did, Ma'am, to the best of my ability, one of the panes with the old pillow-case, and the other with a piece of the old stage green curtain —sure I was as careful as possible all the time you were away, and not a drop of rain came in at that window of all the windows in the house, all winter, Ma'am, when under my care; and now the family's come home, and it's summer time, I never thought no more about it, to be sure—but dear it's a pity to think of your bonnet, Ma'am—but here's what will please you, Ma'am, a letter from Mount Juliet's town, for my lady."—With that she snatches it from me without a word more, and runs up the back stairs to my mistress; I follows with a slate to make up the window—this window was in the long passage, or gallery, as my lady gave out orders to have it called, in the gallery leading to my master's bed-chamber and her's, and when I went up with the slate, the door having no lock, and the bolt spoilt, was a-jar after Mrs. Jane, and as I was busy with the window, I heard all that was saying within.

"Well, what's in your letter, Bella, my dear?" says he, "you're a long time spelling it over."—"Won't you shave this

morning, Sir Condy," says she, and put the letter into her pocket. "I shaved the day before yesterday," says he, "my dear, and that's not what I'm thinking of now—but any thing to oblige you, and to have peace and quietness, my dear," and presently I had the glimpse of him at the cracked glass over the chimney-piece, standing up shaving himself to please my lady. But she took no notice, but went on reading her book, and Mrs. Jane doing her hair behind. "What is it you're reading there, my dear?—phoo, I've cut myself with this razor; the man's a cheat that sold it me, but I have not paid him for it yet—What is it you're reading there? did you hear me asking you, my dear?" "The sorrows of Werter," replies my lady, as well as I could hear. "I think more of the sorrows of Sir Condy," says my master, joking like.—"What news from Mount Juliet's town?"—"No news," says she, "but the old story over again; my friends all reproaching me still for what I can't help now."—"Is it for marrying me," said my master, still shaving, "what signifies, as you say, talking of that, when it can't be helped now?"

With that she heaved a great sigh, that I heard plain enough in the passage.—"And did not you use me basely, Sir Condy," says she, "not to tell me you were ruined before I married you?"—"Tell you, my dear," said he, "did you ever ask me one word about it? and had not you friends enough of your own, that were telling you nothing else from morning to night, if you'd have listened to them slanders."—"No slanders, nor are my friends slanderers; and I can't bear to hear them treated with disrespect as I do," says my lady, and took out her pocket handkerchief—"they are the best of friends, and if I had taken their advice—But my father was wrong to lock me up, I own; that was the only unkind thing I can charge him with; for if he had not locked me up, I should never have had a serious thought of running away as I did." "Well my dear," said my master, "don't cry and make yourself uneasy about it now, when it's all over, and you have the man of your own choice, in spite of 'em all." "I was too young, I know, to make a choice at the time you ran away with me, I'm sure," says my lady, and another sigh, which made my master, half shaved as he was, turn round upon her in surprise—"Why Bell," says he, "you can't deny what you know as well as I do, that it was at your own particular desire, and that twice under your own hand and seal expressed, that I should carry you off as I did to Scotland, and marry you there." "Well, say no more about it, Sir Condy," said my lady, pettish like—"I was a child then, you know." "And as far as I know, you're little better now, my dear Bella, to be talking in this manner to your husband's *face;* but I won't take it ill of you, for I know it's something in that letter you

put in your pocket just now, that has set you against me all on a sudden, and imposed upon your understanding."——"It is not so very easy as you think it, Sir Condy, to impose upon *my* understanding," said my lady—"My dear," says he, "I have, and with reason, the best opinion of your understanding of any man now breathing, and you know I have never set my own in competition with it; till now, my dear Bella," says he, taking her hand from her book as kind as could be, "till now—when I have the great advantage of being quite cool, and you not; so don't believe one word your friends say against your own Sir Condy, and lend me the letter out of your pocket, till I see what it is they can have to say." "Take it then," says she, "and as you are quite cool, I hope it is a proper time to request you'll allow me to comply with the wishes of all my own friends, and return to live with my father and family, during the remainder of my wretched existence, at Mount Juliet's Town."

At this my poor master fell back a few paces, like one that had been shot—"You're not serious, Bella," says he, "and could you find it in your heart to leave me this way in the very middle of my distresses, all alone?" But recollecting himself after his first surprise, and a moment's time for reflection, he said, with a great deal of consideration for my lady—"Well, Bella, my dear, I believe you are right; for what could you do at Castle Rackrent, and an execution against the goods coming down, and the furniture to be canted, and an auction in the house all next week—so you have my full consent to go, since that is your desire, only you must not think of my accompanying you, which I could not in honour do upon the terms I always have been, since our marriage, with your friends; besides, I have business to transact at home—so in the mean time, if we are to have any breakfast this morning, let us go down and have it for the last time in peace and comfort, Bella."

Then, as I heard my master coming to the passage door, I finished fastening up my slate against the broken pane; and when he came out, I wiped down the window seat with my wig,* bade him a good morrow as kindly as I could, seeing he was in trouble, though he strove and thought to hide it

* Wigs were formerly used instead of brooms in Ireland, for sweeping or dusting tables, stairs, &c. The Editor doubted the fact, till he saw a labourer of the old school sweep down a flight of stairs with his wig; he afterwards put it on his head again with the utmost composure, and said, "Oh please your honour, it's never a bit the worse."

It must be acknowledged, that these men are not in any danger of catching cold by taking off their wigs occasionally, because they usually have fine crops of hair growing under their wigs—The wigs are often yellow, and the hair which appears from beneath them black; the wigs are usually too small, and are raised up by the hair beneath, or by the ears of the wearers.

from me.—"This window is all racked and tattered," says I, "and it's what I'm striving to mend." "It *is* all racked and tattered plain enough," says he, "and never mind mending it, honest old Thady," says he, "it will do well enough for you and I, and that's all the company we shall have left in the house by and by."—"I'm sorry to see your honour so low this morning," says I, "but you'll be better after taking your breakfast."—"Step down to the servants' hall," says he, "and bring me up the pen and ink into the parlour, and get a sheet of paper from Mrs. Jane, for I have business that can't brook to be delayed; and come into the parlour with the pen and ink yourself, Thady, for I must have you to witness my signing a paper I have to execute in a hurry."—Well, while I was getting of the pen and ink-horn, and the sheet of paper, I ransacked my brains to think what could be the papers my poor master could have to execute in such a hurry, he that never thought of such a thing as doing business afore breakfast in the whole course of his life, for any man living—but this was for my lady, as I afterwards found, and the more genteel of him after all her treatment.

I was just witnessing the paper that he had scrawled over, and was shaking the ink out of my pen upon the carpet when my lady came in to breakfast, and she started as if it had been a ghost; as well she might, when she saw Sir Condy writing at this unseasonable hour—"That will do very well, Thady," says he to me, and took the paper I had signed to, without knowing what upon the earth it might be, out of my hands and walked, folding it up, to my lady.——

"You are concerned in this, my lady Rackrent," says he, putting it into her hands; "and I beg you'll keep this memorandum safe, and show it to your friends the first thing you do when you get home; but put it in your pocket now, my dear, and let us eat our breakfast, in God's name."—"What is all this?" said my lady, opening the paper in great curiosity. "It's only a bit of a memorandum of what I think becomes me to do whenever I am able," says my master; "you know my situation, tied hand and foot at the present time being, but that can't last always, and when I'm dead and gone, the land will be to the good, Thady, you know; and take notice, it's my intention your lady should have a clear five hundred a year jointure off the estate, afore any of my debts are paid."—"Oh, please your honour," says I, "I can't expect to live to see that time, being now upwards of fourscore and ten years of age, and you a young man, and likely to continue so, by the help of God."—I was vexed to see my lady so insensible too, for all she said was—"This is very genteel of you, Sir Condy.—You need not wait any longer, Thady"—so I just picked up the pen and ink that had tumbled on the floor,

and heard my master finish with saying—"You behaved very genteel to me, my dear, when you threw all the little you had in your own power, along with yourself, into my hands; and as I don't deny but what you may have had some things to complain of," to be sure he was thinking then of Judy, or of the whiskey punch, one or t'other, or both; "and as I don't deny but you may have had something to complain of, my dear, it is but fair you should have something in the form of compensation to look forward to agreeably in future; besides it's an act of justice to myself, that none of your friends, my dear, may ever have it to say against me I married for money, and not for love."—"That is the last thing I should ever have thought of saying of you, Sir Condy," said my lady, looking very gracious.—"Then, my dear," said Sir Condy, "we shall part as good friends as we met, so all's right."

I was greatly rejoiced to hear this, and went out of the parlour, to report it all to the kitchen—The next morning my lady and Mrs. Jane set out for Mount Juliet's town in the jaunting car; many wondered at my lady's choosing to go away, considering all things, upon the jaunting car, as if it was only a party of pleasure; but they did not know, till I told them, that the coach was all broke in the journey down, and no other vehicle but the car to be had; besides, my lady's friends were to send their coach to meet her at the cross roads—so it was all done very proper.

My poor master was in great trouble after my lady left us. —The execution came down; and every thing at Castle Rackrent was seized by the gripers, and my son Jason, to his shame be it spoken, amongst them—I wondered, for the life of me, how he could harden himself to do it, but then he had been studying the law, and had made himself attorney Quirk; so he brought down at once a heap of accounts upon my master's head—To cash lent, and to ditto, and to ditto, and to ditto, and oats, and bills paid at the milliner's and linen draper's, and many dresses for the fancy balls in Dublin for my lady, and all the bills to the workmen and tradesmen for the scenery of the theatre, and the chandler's and grocer's bills, and taylor's, beside butcher's and baker's, and worse than all, the old one of that base wine-merchant's that wanted to arrest my poor master for the amount on the election day, for which amount Sir Condy afterwards passed his note of hand, bearing lawful interest from the date thereof; and the interest and compound interest was now mounted to a terrible deal on many other notes and bonds for money borrowed, and there was besides hush-money to the sub-sheriffs, and sheets upon sheets of old and new attornies' bills, with heavy balances, *as per former account furnished*, brought forward with interest thereon; then there was a powerful deal due to the Crown

for sixteen years arrear of quit-rent of the town lands of Carrickshaughlin, with driver's fees, and a compliment to the receiver every year for letting the quit-rent run on, to oblige Sir Condy, and Sir Kit afore him. Then there was bills for spirits, and ribands at the election time, and the gentlemen of the Committee's accounts unsettled, and their subscription never gathered: and there were cows to be paid for, with the smith and farrier's bills to be set against the rent of the demesne, with calf and hay-money; then there was all the servants' wages, since I don't know when, coming due to them, and sums advanced for them by my son Jason for clothes, and boots, and whips, and odd monies for sundries expended by them in journies to town and elsewhere, and pocket-money for the master continually, and messengers and postage before his being a parliament man—I can't myself tell you what besides; but this I know, that when the evening came on the which Sir Condy had appointed to settle all with my son Jason; and when he comes into the parlour, and sees the sight of bills and load of papers all gathered on the great dining-table for him, he puts his hands before both his eyes, and cries out—"Merciful Jasus! what is it I see before me!"—Then I sets an arm-chair at the table for him, and with a deal of difficulty he sits him down, and my son Jason hands him over the pen and ink to sign to this man's bill, and t'other man's bill, all which he did without making the least objections. Indeed, to give him his due, I never seen a man more fair, and honest, and easy in all his dealings, from first to last, as Sir Condy, or more willing to pay every man his own, as far as he was able, which is as much as any one can do.—"Well," says he, joking like with Jason, "I wish we could settle it all with a stroke of my grey goose quill.—What signifies making me wade through all this ocean of papers here; can't you now, who understand drawing out an account, Debtor and Creditor, just sit down here at the corner of the table, and get it done out for me, that I may have a clear view of the balance, which is all I need be talking about, you know?"—"Very true, Sir Condy, nobody understands business better than yourself;" says Jason:—"So I've a right to do being born and bred to the bar," says Sir Condy—"Thady, do step out and see, are they bringing in the things for the punch, for we've just done all we have to do for this evening."—I goes out accordingly, and when I came back, Jason was pointing to the balance, which was a terrible sight to my poor master.—"Poogh! poogh! poogh!" says he, "here's so many noughts they dazzle my eyes, so they do, and put me in mind of all I suffered, larning of my numeration table, when I was a boy at the day-school along with you, Jason—Units, tens, hundreds, tens of hundreds. Is the punch ready, Thady?"

says he, seeing me, "Immediately, the boy has the jug in his hand; it's coming up stairs, please your honour, as fast as possible," says I, for I saw his honour was tired out of his life, but Jason, very short and cruel, cuts me off with—"Don't be talking of punch yet a while, it's no time for punch yet a bit—Units, tens, hundreds, goes he on, counting over the master's shoulder, Units, tens, hundreds, thousands"—"A-a-agh! hold your hand," cries my master, "where in this wide world am I to find hundreds or units itself, let alone thousands?"—"The balance has been running on too long," says Jason, sticking to him as I could have not done at the time if you'd have given both the Indies and Cork to boot; "the balance has been running on too long, and I'm distressed myself on your account, Sir Condy, for money, and the thing must be settled now on the spot, and the balance cleared off," says Jason. "I'll thank you, if you'll only show me how," says Sir Condy. "There's but one way," says Jason, "and that's ready enough; when there's no cash, what can a gentleman do but go to the land?" "How can you go to the land, and it under custodiam to yourself already," says Sir Condy, "and another custodiam hanging over it? and no one at all can touch it, you know, but the custodees." "Sure can't you sell, though at a loss? sure you can sell, and I've a purchaser ready for you," says Jason. "Have you so?" said Sir Condy, "that's a great point gained; but there's a thing now beyond all, that perhaps you don't know yet, barring Thady has let you into the secret." "Sarrah bit of a secret, or any thing at all of the kind has he learned from me these fifteen weeks come St. John's eve," says I, "for we have scarce been upon speaking terms of late; but what is it your honour means of a secret?" "Why the secret of the little keepsake I gave my lady Rackrent the morning she left us, that she might not go back empty-handed to her friends." "My lady Rackrent, I'm sure, has baubles and keepsakes enough, as those bills on the table will show," says Jason; "but whatever it is," says he, taking up his pen, "we must add it to the balance, for to be sure it can't be paid for." "No, nor can't till after my decease," said Sir Condy, "that's one good thing." Then colouring up a good deal, he tells Jason of the memorandum of the five hundred a year jointure he had settled upon my lady; at which Jason was indeed mad, and said a great deal in very high words, that it was using a gentleman who had the management of his affairs, and was moreover his principal creditor, extremely ill, to do such a thing without consulting him, and against his knowledge and consent. To all which Sir Condy had nothing to reply, but that, upon his conscience, it was in a hurry, and without a moment's thought

on his part, and he was very sorry for it, but if it was to do over again he would do the same; and he appealed to me, and I was ready to give my evidence, if that would do, to the truth of all he said.

So Jason, with much ado, was brought to agree to a compromise. "The purchaser that I have ready," says he, "will be much displeased, to be sure, at the incumbrance on the land, but I must see and manage him—here's a deed ready drawn up—we have nothing to do but to put in the consideration money, and our names to it. And how much am I going to sell?—the lands of O'Shaughlin's-town, and the lands of Gruneaghoolaghan, and the lands of Crookaghnawaturgh," says he, just reading to himself,—"and—Oh, murder, Jason! —sure you won't put this in—the castle, stable, and appurtenances of Castle Rackrent"—"Oh, murder!" says I, clapping my hands, "this is too bad, Jason." "Why so?" said Jason, "when it's all, and a great deal more to the back of it, lawfully mine, was I to push for it." "Look at him," says I, pointing to Sir Condy, who was just leaning back in his arm chair, with his arms falling beside him like one stupified, "is it you, Jason, that can stand in his presence and recollect all he has been to us, and all we have been to him, and yet use him so at the last?"—"Who will he find to use him better, I ask you?" said Jason—"If he can get a better purchaser, I'm content; I only offer to purchase, to make things easy and oblige him; though I don't see what compliment I am under, if you come to that; I have never had, asked, or charged more than sixpence in the pound receiver's fees, and where would he have got an agent for a penny less?" "Oh, Jason! Jason! how will you stand to this in the face of the county, and all who know you," says I, "and what will people think and say, when they see you living here in Castle Rackrent, and the lawful owner turned out of the seat of his ancestors, without a cabin to put his head into, or so much as a potatoe to eat?" Jason, whilst I was saying this, and a great deal more, made me signs, and winks and frowns, but I took no heed, for I was grieved and sick at heart for my poor master, and couldn't but speak.

"Here's the punch!" says Jason, for the door opened, "here's the punch!"—Hearing that, my master starts up in his chair, and recollects himself, and Jason uncorks the whiskey.—"Set down the jug here," says he, making room for it beside the papers opposite to Sir Condy, but still not stirring the deed that was to make over all. Well, I was in great hopes he had some touch of mercy about him, when I saw him making the punch, and my master took a glass; but Jason put it back as he was going to fill again, saying, "No, Sir Condy, it shan't be said of me, I got your signature to this

deed when you were half seas over; you know your name and hand-writing in that condition would not, if brought before the courts, benefit me a straw, wherefore let us settle all before we go deeper into the punch-bowl."—"Settle all as you will," said Sir Condy, clapping his hands to his ears, "but let me hear no more, I'm bothered to death this night." —"You've only to sign," said Jason, putting the pen to him—"Take all, and be content," said my master—So he signed—and the man who brought in the punch witnessed it, for I was not able, but crying like a child; and besides, Jason said, which I was glad of, that I was no fit witness, being so old and doating. It was so bad with me, I could not taste a drop of the punch itself, though my master himself, God bless him! in the midst of his trouble, poured out a glass for me, and brought it up to my lips.—"Not a drop, I thank your honour's honour, as much as if I took it though," and I just set down the glass as it was, and went out; and when I got to the street door, the neighbours' childer, who were playing at marbles there, seeing me in great trouble, left their play, and gathered about me to know what ailed me; and I told them all, for it was a great relief to me to speak to these poor childer, that seemed to have some natural feeling left in them: and when they were made sensible, that Sir Condy was going to leave Castle Rackrent for good and all, they set up a whillalu that could be heard to the farthest end of the street; and one fine boy he was, that my master had given an apple to that morning, cried the loudest, but they all were the same sorry, for Sir Condy was greatly beloved amongst the childer,* for letting them go a nutting in the demesne without saying a word to them, though my lady objected to them.—The people in the town, who were the most of them standing at their doors, hearing the childer cry, would know the reason of it; and when the report was made known, the people one and all gathered in great anger against my son Jason, and terror at the notion of his coming to be landlord over them, and they cried, "No Jason! No Jason!—Sir Condy! Sir Condy! Sir Condy Rackrent for ever!" and the mob grew so great and so loud, I was frightened, and made my way back to the house to warn my son to make his escape, or hide himself for fear of the consequences.—Jason would not believe me till they came all round the house and to the windows with great shouts —then he grew quite pale, and asked Sir Condy what had he best do!—"I'll tell you what you'd best do!" said Sir Condy, who was laughing to see his fright, "finish your glass first, then let's go to the window and show ourselves, and I'll tell 'em, or you shall if you please, that I'm going to the

* This is the invariable pronunciation of the lower Irish.

Lodge for change of air for my health, and by my own desire for the rest of my days."—"Do so," said Jason, who never meant it should have been so, but could not refuse him the Lodge at this unseasonable time. Accordingly Sir Condy threw up the sash and explained matters, and thanked all his friends, and bid 'em look in at the punch bowl, and observe that Jason and he had been sitting over it very good friends; so the mob was content, and he sent 'em out some whiskey to drink his health, and that was the last time his honour's health was ever drunk at Castle Rackrent.

The very next day, being too proud, as he said to me, to stay an hour longer, in a house that did not belong to him, he sets off to the Lodge, and I along with him not many hours after. And there was great bemoaning through all O'Shaughlin's town, which I stayed to witness, and gave my poor master a full account of when I got to the Lodge.—He was very low and in his bed when I got there, and complained of a great pain about his heart, but I guessed it was only trouble, and all the business, let alone vexation, he had gone through of late; and knowing the nature of him from a boy, I took my pipe, and while smoaking it by the chimney, began telling him how he was beloved and regretted in the county, and it did him a deal of good to hear it. "Your honour has a great many friends yet that you don't know of, rich and poor, in the county," says I, "for as I was coming along the road, I met two gentlemen in their own carriages, who asked after you, knowing me, and wanted to know where you was, and all about you, and even how old I was—think of that." Then he wakened out of his doze, and began questioning me who the gentlemen were. And the next morning it came into my head to go, unknown to any body, with my master's compliments round to many of the gentlemen's houses where he and my lady used to visit, and people that I knew were his great friends, and would go to Cork to serve him any day in the year, and I made bold to try to borrow a trifle of cash from them. They all treated me very civil for the most part, and asked a great many questions very kind about my lady and Sir Condy, and all the family, and were greatly surprised to learn from me Castle Rackrent was sold, and my master at the Lodge for health; and they all pitied him greatly, and he had their good wishes if that would do, but money was a thing they unfortunately had not any of them at this time to spare. I had my journey for my pains, and I, not used to walking, nor supple as formerly, was greatly tired, but had the satisfaction of telling my master, when I got to the Lodge, all the civil things said by high and low.

"Thady," says he, "all you've been telling me brings a strange thought into my head; I've a notion I shall not be

long for this world any how, and I've a great fancy to see my own funeral afore I die." I was greatly shocked at the first speaking to hear him speak so light about his funeral, and he to all appearance in good health, but recollecting myself, answered—" To be sure it would be as fine a sight as one could see, I dared to say, and one I should be proud to witness, and I did not doubt his honour's would be as great a funeral as ever Sir Patrick O'Shaughlin's was, and such a one as that had never been known in the county afore or since." But I never thought he was in earnest about seeing his own funeral himself, till the next day he returns to it again. " Thady," says he, " as far as the wake* goes, sure I might without any great trouble have the satisfaction of seeing a bit of my own funeral."—" Well, since your honour's honour's so bent upon it," says I, not willing to cross him, and he in trouble, " we must see what we can do." So he fell into a sort of a sham disorder, which was easy done, as he kept his bed, and no one to see him; and I got my shister, who was an old woman very handy about the sick, and very skilful, to come up to the Lodge to nurse him; and we gave out, she knowing no better, that he was just at his latter end, and it answered beyond any thing; and there was a great throng of people, men, women, and childer, and there being only two rooms at the Lodge, except what was locked up full of Jason's furniture and things, the house was soon as full and fuller than it could hold, and the heat, and smoke, and noise wonderful great; and standing amongst them that were near the bed, but not thinking at all of the dead, I was started by the sound of my master's voice from under the great coats that had been thrown all top, and I went close up, no one noticing. " Thady," says he, " I've had enough of this, I'm smothering, and I can't hear a word of all they're saying of the deceased." " God bless you, and lie still quiet," says I, " a bit longer, for my shister's afraid of ghosts, and would die on the spot with the fright, was she to see you come to life all on a sudden this way without the least preparation." So he lays him still, though well nigh stifled, and I made all haste to tell the secret of the joke, whispering to one and t'other, and there was a great surprise, but not so great as we had laid out it would. —" And aren't we to have the pipes and tobacco, after coming so far to-night," says some; but they were all well enough pleased when his honour got up to drink with them, and sent for more spirits from a shebean-house,† where they very

* A wake in England is a meeting avowedly for merriment—in Ireland it is a nocturnal meeting avowedly for the purpose of watching and bewailing the dead; but in reality for gossipping and debauchery.

† *Shebean-house*—a hedge ale house. Shebean properly means weak small beer, taplash.

civilly let him have it upon credit—so the night passed off very merrily, but to my mind, Sir Condy was rather upon the sad order in the midst of it all, not finding there had been such a great talk about himself after his death as he had always expected to hear.

The next morning when the house was cleared of them, and none but my shister and myself left in the kitchen with Sir Condy, one opens the door and walks in, and who should it be but Judy M'Quirk herself. I forgot to notice that she had been married long since, whilst young Captain Moneygawl lived at the Lodge, to the Captain's huntsman, who, after a whilst, listed and left her, and was killed in the wars. Poor Judy fell off greatly in her good looks after her being married a year or two, and being smoke-dried in the cabin and neglecting herself like, it was hard for Sir Condy himself to know her again till she spoke; but when she says, "It's Judy M'Quirk, please your honour, don't you remember her?"—"Oh, Judy, is it you?" says his honour—"yes, sure, I remember you very well—but you're greatly altered, Judy." "Sure it's time for me," says she, "and I think your honour since I *seen* you last, but that's a great while ago, is altered too." "And with reason, Judy," says Sir Condy, fetching a sort of a sigh—"but how's this, Judy," he goes on, "I take it a little amiss of you that you were not at my wake last night?" "Ah, don't be being jealous of that," says she, "I didn't hear a sentence of your honour's wake, till it was all over, or it would have gone hard with me but I would have been at it sure; but I was forced to go ten miles up the country three days ago to a wedding of a relation of my own's, and didn't get home till after the wake was over; but," says she, "it won't be so, I hope, the next time,* please your honour." "That we shall see, Judy," says his honour, "and may be sooner than you think for, for I've been very unwell this while past, and don't reckon any way I'm long for this world." At this Judy takes up the corner of her apron, and puts it first to one eye and then to t'other, being to all appearance in great trouble; and my shister put in her word, and bid his honour have a good heart, for she was sure it was only the gout that Sir Patrick used to have flying about him, and that he ought to drink a glass or a bottle extraordinary to keep it out of his stomach, and he promised to take her advice, and sent out for more spirits immediately; and Judy made a sign to me, and I went over to the door to her, and she said—"I wonder to see Sir Condy so low!—Has he heard the news?" "What

* At the coronation of one of our monarchs, the king complained of the confusion which happened in the procession—The great officer who presided told his Majesty, "That it should not be so next time."

news?" says I. "Didn't ye hear it, then?" says she, "my lady Rackrent that was is kilt and lying for dead, and I don't doubt but it's all over with her by this time." "Mercy on us all," says I, "how was it?" "The jaunting car, it was that ran away with her," says Judy. "I was coming home that same time from Biddy M'Guggin's marriage, and a great crowd of people too upon the road coming from the fair of Crookagnawatur, and I sees a jaunting car standing in the middle of the road, and with the two wheels off, and all tattered.—"What's this?" says I.—"Didn't ye hear of it?" says they that were looking on, "it's my lady Rackrent's car, that was running away from her husband, and the horse took fright at a carrion that lay across the road, and so ran away with the jaunting car, and my lady Rackrent and her maid screaming, and the horse ran with them against a car that was coming from the fair, with the boy asleep on it, and the lady's petticoat hanging out of the jaunting car caught, and she was dragged I can't tell you how far upon the road, and it all broken up with the stones just going to be pounded, and one of the road makers with his sledge hammer in his hand stops the horse at the last; but my lady Rackrent was all kilt* and smashed, and they lifted her into a cabin hard by, and the maid was found after, where she had been thrown, in the gripe of the ditch, her cap and bonnet all full of bog water—and they say my lady can't live any way. Thady, pray now is it true what I'm told for sartain, that Sir Condy has made over all to your son Jason?"—"All," says I. "All entirely?" says she again. "All entirely," says I. "Then," says she, "that's a great shame, but don't be telling Jason what I say." "And what is it you say?" cries Sir Condy, leaning over betwixt us, which made Judy start greatly—"I know the time when Judy M'Quirk would never have stayed so long talking at the door, and I in the house." "Oh," says Judy, "for shame, Sir Condy, times are altered since then, and it's my lady Rackrent you ought to be thinking of."—"And why should I be thinking of her, that's not thinking of me now?" says Sir Condy.—"No matter for that," says Judy, very properly, "it's time you should be thinking of her, if ever you mean to do it at all, for don't you know she's lying for death?"—"My lady Rackrent?" says Sir Condy in a sur-

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* *Kilt and smashed*—Our author is not here guilty of an anticlimax. The mere English reader, from a similarity of sound between the words *kilt* and *killed*, might be induced to suppose that their meanings are similar, yet they are not by any means in Ireland synonymous terms. Thus you may hear a man exclaim—"I'm kilt and murdered!"—but he frequently means only that he has received a black eye or a slight contusion. *I'm kilt all over*—means that he is in a worse state than being simply *kilt*—Thus—*I'm kilt with the cold*—is nothing to—*I'm kilt all over with the rheumatism*.

prise, "why it's but two days since we parted, as you very well know, Thady, in her full health and spirits, and she and her maid along with her going to Mount Juliet's town on her jaunting car."—"She'll never ride no more on her jaunting car," said Judy, "for it has been the death of her, sure enough."—"And is she dead then?" says his honour.—"As good as dead, I hear," says Judy, "but there's Thady here has just learnt the whole truth of the story as I had it, and it is fitter he or any body else should be telling it you than I, Sir Condy—I must be going home to the childer."—But he stops her, but rather from civility in him, as I could see very plainly, than any thing else, for Judy was, as his honour remarked at her first coming in, greatly changed, and little likely, as far as I could see—though she did not seem to be clear of it herself—little likely to be my lady Rackrent now, should there be a second toss-up to be made.—But I told him the whole story out of the face, just as Judy had told it to me, and he sent off a messenger with his compliments to Mount Juliet's town that evening, to learn the truth of the report, and Judy bid the boy that was going call in at Tim M'Enerney's shop in O'Shaughlin's town, and buy her a new shawl.—"Do so," says Sir Condy, "and tell Tim to take no money from you, for I must pay him for the shawl myself." At this my shister throws me over a look, and I says nothing, but turned the tobacco in my mouth, whilst Judy began making a many words about it, and saying how she could not be beholden for shawls to any gentleman. I left her there to consult with my shister, did she think there was any thing in it, and my shister thought I was blind to be asking her the question, and I thought my shister must see more into it than I did, and recollecting all past times and every thing, I changed my mind, and came over to her way of thinking, and we settled it that Judy was very like to be my lady Rackrent after all, if a vacancy should have happened.

The next day, before his honour was up, somebody comes with a double knock at the door, and I was greatly surprised to see it was my son Jason—"Jason, is it you?" says I, "what brings you to the Lodge?" says I, "is it my lady Rackrent? we know that already since yesterday." "May be so," says he, "but I must see Sir Condy about it."—"You can't see him yet," says I; "sure he is not awake." "What then," says he, "can't he be wakened? and I standing at the door."—"I'll not be disturbing his honour for you, Jason," says I; "many's the hour you've waited in your time, and been proud to do it, till his honour was at leisure to speak to you.—His honour," says I, raising my voice—at which his honour wakens of his own accord, and calls to me from the room to know who it was I was speaking to. Jason made no

more ceremony, but follows me into the room.—"How are you, Sir Condy?" says he; "I'm happy to see you looking so well; I came up to know how you did to-day, and to see did you want for any thing at the Lodge."—"Nothing at all, Mr. Jason, I thank you," says he, for his honour had his own share of pride, and did not choose, after all that had passed, to be beholden, I suppose, to my son, "but pray take a chair and be seated, Mr. Jason."—Jason sat him down upon the chest, for chair there was none, and after he had sat there some time, and a silence on all sides—"What news is there stirring in the country, Mr. Jason M'Quirk?" says Sir Condy, very easy, yet high like.—"None that's news to you, Sir Condy, I hear," says Jason, "I am sorry to hear of my lady Rackrent's accident."—"I am much obliged to you, and so is her ladyship, I'm sure," answers Sir Condy, still stiff; and there was another sort of a silence, which seemed to lie the heaviest on my son Jason.

"Sir Condy," says he at last, seeing Sir Condy disposing himself to go to sleep again, "Sir Condy, I dare say you recollect mentioning to me the little memorandum you gave to lady Rackrent about the £500 a year jointure."—"Very true," said Sir Condy, "it is all in my recollection."—"But if my lady Rackrent dies, there's an end of all jointure," says Jason. "Of course," says Sir Condy.—"But it's not a matter of certainty that my lady Rackrent won't recover," says Jason.—"Very true, Sir," says my master.—"It's a fair speculation then, for you to consider what the chance of the jointure on those lands when out of custodiam will be to you."—"Just five hundred a year, I take it, without any speculation at all," said Sir Condy.—"That's supposing the life dropt, and the custodiam off, you know, begging your pardon, Sir Condy, who understand business, that is a wrong calculation."—"Very likely so," said Sir Condy; "but Mr. Jason, if you have any thing to say to me this morning about it, I'd be obliged to you to say it, for I had an indifferent night's rest last night, and wouldn't be sorry to sleep a little this morning."—"I have only three words to say, and those more of consequence to you, Sir Condy, than me. You are a little cool, I observe, but I hope you will not be offended at what I have brought here in my pocket,"—and he pulls out two long rolls, and showers down golden guineas upon the bed. "What's this?" said Sir Condy; "it's long since"—but his pride stops him—"All these are your lawful property this minute, Sir Condy, if you please," said Jason.—"Not for nothing, I'm sure," said Sir Condy, and laughs a little—"nothing for nothing, or I'm under a mistake with you, Jason"—"Oh, Sir Condy, we'll not be indulging ourselves in any un-

pleasant retrospects," says Jason, "it's my present intention to behave, as I'm sure you will, like a gentleman in this affair. —Here's two hundred guineas, and a third I mean to add, if you should think proper to make over to me all your right and title to those lands that you know of."—"I'll consider of it," said my master; and a great deal more, that I was tired listening to, was said by Jason, and all that, and the sight of the ready cash upon the bed worked with his honour, and the short and long of it was, Sir Condy gathered up the golden guineas, and tied them up in a handkerchief, and signed some paper Jason brought with him as usual, and there was an end of the business; Jason took himself away, and my master turned himself round and fell asleep again.

I soon found what had put Jason in such a hurry, to conclude this business. The little gossoon we had sent off the day before with my master's compliments to Mount Juliet's town, and to know how my lady did after her accident, was stopped early this morning, coming back with his answer through O'Shaughlin's town, at Castle Rackrent by my son Jason, and questioned of all he knew of my lady from the servant at Mount Juliet's town; and the gossoon told him my lady Rackrent was not expected to live over night, so Jason thought it high time to be moving to the Lodge to make his bargain with my master about the jointure afore it should be too late, and afore the little gossoon should reach us with the news. My master was greatly vexed, that is, I may say, as much as ever I seen him when he found how he had been taken in; but it was some comfort, to have the ready cash for immediate consumption in the house any way.

And when Judy came up that evening, and brought the childer to see his honour, he unties the handkerchief, and God bless him! whether it was little or much he had, 'twas all the same with him, he gives 'em all round guineas a-piece." —"Hold up your head," says my shister to Judy, as Sir Condy was busy filling out a glass of punch for her eldest boy—"Hold up your head, Judy, for who knows but we may live to see you yet at the head of the Castle Rackrent estate." —"May be so," says she, "but not the way you are thinking of."—I did not rightly understand which way Judy was looking when she makes this speech, till a while after.—"Why, Thady, you were telling me yesterday, that Sir Condy had sold all entirely to Jason, and where then does all them guineas in the handkerchief come from!" "They are the purchase money of my lady's jointure," says I.—Judy looks a little bit puzzled at this—"A penny for your thoughts, Judy," says my shister—"hark, sure Sir Condy is drinking her

health."—He was at the table in *the room*,* drinking with the exciseman and the gauger, who came up to see his honour, and we were standing over the fire in the kitchen.—"I don't much care is he drinking my health or not," says Judy, "and it is not Sir Condy I'm thinking of, with all your jokes, whatever he is of me." "Sure you wouldn't refuse to be my lady Rackrent, Judy, if you had the offer?" says I.—"But if I could do better!" says she. "How better?" says I and my shister both at once.—"How better?" says she, "why what signifies it to be my lady Rackrent and no Castle? sure what good is the car and no horse to draw it?"—"And where will ye get the horse, Judy?" says I.—"Never you mind that," says she—"may be it is your own son Jason might find that."—"Jason!" says I, "don't be trusting to him, Judy. Sir Condy, as I have good reason to know, spoke well of you, when Jason spoke very indifferently of you Judy."—"No matter," says Judy, "it's often men speak the contrary just to what they think of us."—"And you the same way of them, no doubt," answers I.—"Nay, don't be denying it, Judy, for I think the better of ye for it, and shouldn't be proud to call ye the daughter of a shister's son of mine, if I was to hear ye talk ungrateful, and any way disrespectful of his honour."—"What disrespect," says she, "to say I'd rather, if it was my luck, be the wife of another man?" "You'll have no luck, mind my words, Judy," says I; and all I remembered about my poor master's goodness in tossing up for her afore he married at all, came across me, and I had a choking in my throat, that hindered me to say more.—"Better luck, any how, Thady," says she, "than to be like some folk, following the fortunes of them that have none left." "Oh King of Glory!" says I, "hear the pride and ungratitude of her, and he giving his last guineas but a minute ago to her childer, and she with the fine shawl on her he made her a present of but yesterday!"—"Oh troth, Judy, you're wrong now," says my shister, looking at the shawl.—"And was not he wrong yesterday then," says she, "to be telling me I was greatly altered, to affront me?"—"But Judy," says I, "what is it brings you here then at all in the mind you are in—is it to make Jason think the better of you?"—"I'll tell you no more of my secrets, Thady," says she, "nor would have told you this much, had I taken you for such an unnatural fader as I find you are, not to wish your own son prefarred to another."—"Oh troth, *you* are wrong, now, Thady," says my shister.—Well, I was never so put to it in my life between these womens, and my son and my master, and all I felt and thought just now, I could not upon my conscience tell which was the

* *The room*—the principal room in the house.

wrong from the right.—So I said not a word more, but was only glad his honour had not the luck to hear all Judy had been saying of him, for I reckoned it would have gone nigh to break his heart; not that I was of opinion he cared for her as much as she and my shister fancied, but the ungratitude of the whole from Judy might not plase him, and he could never stand the notion of not being well spoken of or beloved like behind his back. Fortunately for all parties concerned, he was so much elevated at this time, there was no danger of his understanding any thing, even if it had reached his ears. There was a great horn at the Lodge, ever since my master and Captain Moneygawl was in together, that used to belong originally to the celebrated Sir Patrick, his ancestor; and his honour was fond often of telling the story, that he learned from me when a child, how Sir Patrick drank the full of this horn without stopping, and this was what no other man afore or since could without drawing breath.—Now Sir Condy challenged the gauger, who seemed to think little of the horn, to swallow the contents, and had it filled to the brim with punch; and the gauger said it was what he could not do for nothing, but he'd hold Sir Condy a hundred guineas he'd do it.—"Done," says my master, "I'll lay you a hundred golden guineas to a tester* you don't."—"Done," says the gauger, and done and done's enough between two gentlemen. The gauger was cast, and my master won the bet, and thought he'd won a hundred guineas, but by the wording it was adjudged to be only a tester that was his due by the exciseman. It was all one to him, he was as well pleased, and I was glad to see him in such spirits again.

The gauger, bad luck to him! was the man that next proposed to my master, to try himself could he take at a draught the contents of the great horn.—"Sir Patrick's horn!" said his honour; "hand it to me—I'll hold you your own bet over again I'll swallow it."—"Done," says the gauger, "I'll lay ye any thing at all you do no such thing."—"A hundred guineas to sixpence I do," says he, "bring me the handkerchief."—I was loth knowing he meant the handkerchief with the gold in it, to bring it out in such company, and his honour not very able to reckon it. "Bring me the handkerchief then, Thady," says he, and stamps with his foot; so with that I pulls it out of my great coat pocket, where I had put it for safety. Oh, how it grieved me to see the guineas counting upon the table, and they the last my master had! Says Sir

* *Tester*—Sixpence—from the French word tête a head. A piece of silver stamped with a head, which in old French was called, "un testion," and which was about the value of an old English sixpence.—Tester is used in Shakspeare.

Condy to me—"Your hand is steadier than mine to-night, Old Thady, and that's a wonder; fill you the horn for me."—And so, wishing his honour success, I did—but I filled it, little thinking of what would befall him.—He swallows it down, and drops like one shot.—We lifts him up, and he was speechless, and quite black in the face. We put him to bed, and in a short time he wakened raving with a fever on his brain.—He was shocking either to see or hear.—"Judy! Judy! have ye no touch of feeling? won't you stay to help us nurse him?" says I to her, and she putting on her shawl to go out of the house.—"I'm frightened to see him," says she, "and wouldn't nor couldn't stay in it—and what use?—he can't last till the morning." With that she ran off.—There was none but my shister and myself left near him of all the many friends he had. The fever came and went, and came and went, and lasted five days, and the sixth he was sensible for a few minutes, and said to me, knowing me very well—"I'm in burning pain all within side of me, Thady."—I could not speak, but my shister asked him would he have this thing, or t'other to do him good?"—"No," says he, "nothing will do me good no more"—and he gave a terrible screech with the torture he was in—then again a minute's ease—"brought to this by drink," says he,—"where are all the friends?—where's Judy?—Gone, hey?—Aye, Sir Condy has been a fool all his days"—said he, and there was the last word he spoke, and died. He had but a very poor funeral, after all.

If you want to know any more, I'm not very well able to tell you; but my lady Rackrent did not die, as was expected of her, but was only disfigured in the face ever after by the fall and bruises she got; and she and Jason, immediately after my poor master's death, set about going to law about that jointure; the memorandum not being on stamped paper, some say it is worth nothing, others again it may do; others say, Jason won't have the lands at any rate—many wishes it so—for my part, I'm tired wishing for any thing in this world, after all I've seen in it—but I'll say nothing; it would be a folly to be getting myself ill will in my old age. Jason did not marry, nor think of marrying Judy, as I prophesied, and I am not sorry for it—who is?—As for all I have here set down from memory and hearsay of the family, there's nothing but truth in it from beginning to end: that you may depend upon, for where's the use of telling lies about the things, which every body knows as well as I do?

The Editor could have readily made the catastrophe of Sir Condy's history more dramatic, and more pathetic, if he thought it allowable to varnish the plain round tale of faithful

Thady. He lays it before the English reader as a specimen of manners and characters, which are perhaps unknown in England. Indeed the domestic habits of no nation in Europe were less known to the English, than those of their sister country, till within these few years.

Mr. Young's picture of Ireland, in his tour through that country, was the first faithful portrait of its inhabitants. All the features in the foregoing sketch were taken from the life, and they are characteristic of that mixture of quickness, simplicity, cunning, carelessness, dissipation, disinterestedness, shrewdness, and blunder, which in different forms, and with various success, has been brought upon the stage, or delineated in novels.

It is a problem of difficult solution, to determine, whether an Union will hasten or retard the melioration of this country. The few Gentlemen of education, who now reside in this country, will resort to England: they are few, but they are in nothing inferior to men of the same rank in Great Britain. The best that can happen, will be the introduction of British manufacturers in their places.

Did the Warwickshire militia, who were chiefly artisans, teach the Irish to drink beer? or did they learn from the Irish to drink Whiskey?

GLOSSARY.

Page 75. *Monday morning.*—Thady begins his Memoirs of the Rackrent Family by dating *Monday morning*, because no great undertaking can be auspiciously commenced in Ireland on any morning but *Monday morning.*—" O, please God we live till Monday morning, we'll set the slater to mend the roof of the house—On Monday morning we'll fall to, and cut the turf—On Monday morning we'll see and begin mowing—On Monday morning, please your honour, we'll begin and dig the potatoes," &c.

All the intermediate days, between the making of such speeches and the ensuing Monday, are wasted: and when Monday morning comes, it is ten to one that the business is deferred to *the next* Monday morning. The Editor knew a gentleman, who, to counteract this prejudice, made his work men and labourers begin all new pieces of work upon a Saturday.

Page 76. *Let alone the three Kingdoms itself.—Let alone*, in this sentence, means *put out of consideration.* This phrase *let alone*, which is now used as the imperative of a verb, may in time become a conjunction, and may exercise the ingenuity of some future etymologist. The celebrated Horne Tooke has proved most satisfactorily, that the conjunction *but* comes from the imperative of the Anglo-Saxon verb *(beoutan) to be out;* also, that *if* comes from *gif*, the imperative of the Anglo-Saxon verb, which signifies *to give*, &c.

Page 77. *Willaluh*—Ullaloo, Gol, or lamentation over the Dead.

" Magnoque ululante tumultu." *Virgil.*
" Ululatibus omne
Implevere ne mns." *Ovid.*

A full account of the Irish Gol, or Ullaloo, and of the Caoinan or Irish funeral song, with its first semichorus, second semichorus, full chorus of sighs and groans, together with the Irish words and music, may be found in the fourth volume of the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. For the advantage of *lazy* readers, who would rather read a page than walk a yard, and from compassion, not to say sympathy with their infirmity, the Editor transcribes the following passages.

" The Irish have been always remarkable for their funeral lamentations, and this peculiarity has been noticed by almost every traveller who visited them. And it seems derived from their Celtic ancestors, the primæval inhabitants of this isle. * * * *

" It has been affirmed of the Irish that to cry was more natural to them than to any other nation, and at length the Irish cry became proverbial. * * * *

" Cambrensis in the twelfth century says, the Irish then musically expressed their griefs; that is, they applied the musical art, in which they excelled all others, to the orderly celebration of funeral obsequies, by dividing the mourners into two bodies, each alternately singing their part, and the whole at times joining in full chorus. * * * * * *

"The body of the deceased, dressed in grave clothes, and ornamented with flowers, was placed on a bier, or some elevated spot. The relations and keepers *(singing mourners)* ranged themselves in two divisions, one at the head, and the other at the feet of the corpse. The bards and croteries had before prepared the funeral Caoinan. The chief bard of the head chorus began by singing the first stanza in a low, doleful tone, which was softly accompanied by the harp: at the conclusion the foot semichorus began the lamentation, or Ullaloo, from the final note of the preceding stanza, in which they were answered by the head semichorus; then both united in one general chorus. The chorus of the first stanza being ended, the chief bard of the foot semichorus began the second Gol or lamentation, in which he was answered by that of the head; and then as before both united in the general full chorus. Thus alternately were the song and choruses performed during the night. The genealogy, rank, possessions, the virtues and vices of the dead were rehearsed, and a number of interrogations were addressed to the deceased: as, Why did he die? If married, whether his wife was faithful to him, his sons dutiful, or good hunters or warriors? If a woman, whether her daughters were fair or chaste? If a young man, whether he had been crossed in love? or if the blue-eyed maids of Erin treated him with scorn?"

We are told, that formerly the feet (the metrical feet) of the Caoinan were much attended to; but on the decline of the Irish bards these feet were gradually neglected, and the Caoinan fell into a sort of slip-shod metre amongst women. Each province had different Caoinans, or at least different imitations of the original. There was the Munster cry, the Ulster cry, &c. It became an extempore performance, and every set of keepers varied the melody according to their own fancy.

It is curious to observe how customs and ceremonies degenerate. The present Irish cry, or howl, cannot boast of such melody, nor is the funeral procession conducted with much dignity. The crowd of people, who assemble at these funerals, sometimes amounts to a thousand, often to four or five hundred. They gather as the bearers of the hearse proceed on their way, and when they pass through any village, or when they come near any houses, they begin to cry—Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Agh! Agh! raising their notes from the first *Oh!* to the last *Agh!* in a kind of mournful howl. This gives notice to the inhabitants of the village, that *a funeral is passing*, and immediately they flock out to follow it. In the province of Munster it is a common thing for the women to follow a funeral, to join in the universal cry with all their might and main for some time, and then to turn and ask—"Arrah! who is it that's dead?—who is it we're crying for?"—Even the poorest people have their own burying-places, that is, spots of ground in the church-yards, where they say that their ancestors have been buried ever since the wars of Ireland: and if these burial-places are ten miles from the place where a man dies, his friends and neighbours take care to carry his corpse thither. Always one priest, often five or six priests, attend these funerals; each priest repeats a mass, for which he is paid sometimes a shilling, sometimes half-a-crown, sometimes half-a-guinea, or a guinea, according to their circumstances, or as they say, according to the *ability* of the deceased. After the burial of any very poor man, who has left a widow or children, the priest makes what is

called *a collection* for the widow; he goes round to every person present, and each contributes sixpence, or a shilling, or what they please. The reader will find in the note upon the word *Wake* p. 137, more particulars respecting the conclusion of the Irish funerals.

Certain old women, who cry particularly loud and well, are in great request, and, as a man said to the Editor, "Every one would wish and be proud to have such at his funeral, or at that of his friends." The lower Irish are wonderfully eager to attend the funerals of their friends and relations, and they make their relationships branch out to a great extent. The proof, that a poor man has been well beloved during his life, is his having a crowded funeral. To attend a neighbour's funeral is a cheap proof of humanity, but it does not, as some imagine, cost nothing. The time spent in attending funerals may be safely valued at half a million to the Irish nation: the Editor thinks, that double that sum would not be too high an estimate. The habits of profligacy and drunkenness, which are acquired at *wakes*, are here put out of the question. When a labourer, a carpenter, or a smith is not at his work, which frequently happens, ask where he is gone, and ten to one the answer is—"O faith, please your honour, he couldn't do a stroke to day, for he's gone to *the* funeral."

Even beggars, when they grow old, go about begging *for their own funerals;* that is, begging for money to buy a coffin, candles, pipes, and tobacco. For the use of the candles, pipes, and tobacco, see *Wake.*

Those who value customs in proportion to their antiquity, and nations in proportion to their adherence to ancient customs, will doubtless admire the Irish *Ullaloo*, and the Irish nation, for persevering in this usage from time immemorial. The Editor, however, has observed some alarming symptoms, which seem to prognosticate the declining taste for the Ullaloo in Ireland. In a comic theatrical entertainment represented not long since on the Dublin stage, a chorus of old women was introduced, who set up the Irish howl round the relics of a physician, who is supposed to have fallen under the wooden sword of Harlequin. After the old women have continued their Ullaloo for a decent time, with all the necessary accompaniments of wringing their hands, wiping or rubbing their eyes with the corners of their gowns or aprons, &c. one of the mourners suddenly suspends her lamentable cries, and turning to her neighbour, asks—"Arrah now, honey, who is it we're crying for?"

Page 78. *The tenants were sent away without their whiskey.*—It is usual with some landlords, to give their inferior tenants a glass of whiskey, when they pay their rents. Thady calls it *their* whiskey; not that the whiskey is actually the property of the tenants, but that it becomes their *right*, after it has been often given to them. In this general mode of reasoning respecting *rights* the lower Irish are not singular, but they are peculiarly quick and tenacious in claiming these rights —"Last year your honour gave me some straw for the roof of my house, and I *expect* your honour will be after doing the same this year." —In this manner gifts are frequently turned into tributes. The high and low are not always dissimilar in their habits. It is said, that the Sublime Ottoman Porte is very apt to claim gifts as tributes: thus it is dangerous to send the Grand Seignior a fine horse on his birth day one

year, lest on his next birth day he should expect a similar present, and should proceed to demonstrate the reasonableness of his expectations.

Page 78. *He demeaned himself greatly*—Means, he lowered, or disgraced himself much.

Page 79. *Duty fowls—and duty turkies—and duty geese.*—In many leases in Ireland, tenants were *formerly* bound to supply an inordinate quantity of poultry to their landlords. The Editor knew of thirty turkies being reserved in one lease of a small farm.

Page 79. *English tenants.*—An English tenant does not mean a tenant who is an Englishman, but a tenant who pays his rent the day that it is due. It is a common prejudice in Ireland, amongst the poorer classes of people, to believe that all tenants in England pay their rents on the very day when they become due. An Irishman, when he goes to take a farm, if he wants to prove to his landlord that he is a substantial man, offers to become an *English tenant.* If a tenant disobliges his landlord by voting against him, or against his opinion, at an election, the tenant is immediately informed by the agent, that he must become an *English tenant.* This threat does not imply, that he is to change his language or his country, but that he must pay all the arrear of rent which he owes, and that he must thenceforward pay his rent on the day when it becomes due.

Page 79. *Canting*—Does not mean talking or writing hypocritical nonsense, but selling substantially by auction.

Page 79. *Duty work.*—It was formerly common in Ireland to insert clauses in leases, binding tenants to furnish their landlords with labourers and horses for several days in the year. Much petty tyranny and oppression have resulted from this feudal custom. Whenever a poor man disobliged his landlord, the agent sent to him for his duty work, and Thady does not exaggerate when he says, that the tenants were often called from their own work to do that of their landlord. Thus the very means of earning their rent were taken from them: whilst they were getting home their landlord's harvest, their own was often ruined, and yet their rents were expected to be paid as punctually as if their time had been at their own disposal. This appears the height of absurd injustice.

In Esthonia amongst the poor Sclavonian race of peasant slaves, they pay tributes to their lords, not under the name of duty work, duty geese, duty turkies, &c. but under the name of *righteousnesses.* The following ballad is a curious specimen of Esthonian poetry:

"This is the cause that the country is ruined,
And the straw of the thatch is eaten away,
The gentry are come to live in the land—
Chimneys between the village,
And the proprietor upon the white floor!
The sheep brings forth a lamb with a white forehead;
This is paid to the Lord for a *righteousness sheep.*
The sow farrows pigs,
They go to the spit of the lord.
The hen lays eggs,
They go into the lord's frying pan.
The cow drops a male calf,
That goes into the lord's herd as a bull.

The mare foals a horse foal,
That must be for my lord's nag.
The boor's wife has sons,
They must go to look after my lord's poultry."

Page 80. *Out of forty-nine suits which he had, he never lost one —but seventeen.*—Thady's language in this instance is a specimen of a mode of rhetoric common in Ireland. An astonishing assertion is made in the beginning of a sentence which ceases to be in the least surprising, when you hear the qualifying explanation that follows.—Thus a man, who is in the last stage of staggering drunkenness, will, if he can articulate, swear to you—" Upon his conscience now, and may he never stir from the spot alive if he is telling a lie, upon his conscience he has not tasted a drop of any thing, good or bad, since morning at-all-at-all—— but half a pint of whiskey, please your honour."

Page 80. *Fairy Mounts*—Barrows. Is is said that these high mounts were of great service to the natives of Ireland, when Ireland was invaded by the Danes. Watch was always kept on them, and upon the approach of an enemy a fire was lighted to give notice to the next watch, and thus the intelligence was quickly communicated through the country. *Some years ago*, the common people believed that these Barrows were inhabited by fairies, or as they called them by the *good people*.—" O troth, to the best of my belief, and to the best of my judgment and opinion," said an elderly man to the Editor, " it was only the old people that had nothing to do, and got together, and were telling stories about them fairies, but to the best of my judgment there's nothing in it.—Only this I heard myself not very many years back from a decent kind of a man, a grazier, that as he was coming just *fair and easy (quietly)* from the fair, with some cattle and sheep that he had not sold, just at the church of ——, at an angle of the road like, he was met by a good looking man, who asked him where he was going? And he answered, 'Oh, far enough, I must be going all night.'—'No, that you musn't nor won't (says the man) you'll sleep with me the night, and you'll want for nothing, nor your cattle nor sheep neither, nor your *beast (horse)*; so come along with me.'—With that the grazier *lit* (alighted) from his horse, and it was dark night; but presently he finds himself, he does not know in the wide world how, in a fine house, and plenty of every thing to eat and drink—nothing at all wanting that he could wish for or think of—And he does not *mind*, (*recollect or know*) how at last he falls asleep; and in the morning he finds himself lying, not in ever a bed or a house at all, but just in the angle of the road where first he met the strange man: there he finds himself lying on his back on the grass, and all his sheep feeding as quiet as ever all round about him, and his horse the same way, and the bridle of the beast over his wrist. And I asked him what he thought of it, and from first to last he could think of nothing but for certain sure it must have been the fairies, that entertained him so well. For there was no house to see any where nigh hand, or any building, or barn, or place at all, but only the church and the *mote (barrow)*. There's another odd thing enough that they tell about this same church, that if any person's corpse, that had not a right to be buried in that church-yard, went to be burying there in it, no not all the men, women or childer in all Ireland could get the corpse any way into the church-yard, but as they would be trying to go into the church-yard, their feet would seem to be going

backwards instead of forwards; aye, continually backwards the whole funeral would seem to go; and they would never set foot with the corpse in the church yard. Now they say, that it is the fairies do all this; but it is my opinion it is all idle talk, and people are after being wiser now."

The country people in Ireland certainly *had* great admiration mixed with reverence, if not dread of fairies. They believed, that beneath these fairy mounts were spacious subterraneous palaces inhabited by *the good people*, who must not on any account be disturbed. When the wind raises a little eddy of dust upon the road the poor people believe that it is raised by the fairies, that it is a sign that they are journeying from one of the fairies mounts to another, and they say to the fairies, or to the dust as it passes—"God speed ye, gentlemen, God speed ye." This averts any evil that *the good people* might be inclined to do them. There are innumerable stories told of the friendly and unfriendly feats of these busy fairies: some of these tales are ludicrous, and some romantic enough for poetry. It is a pity that poets should lose such convenient, though diminutive machinery.—By the by, Parnel, who showed himself so deeply "skilled in faerie lore," was an Irishman; and though he has presented his faeries to the world in the ancient English dress of "Britain's Isle, and Arthur's days," it is probable that his first acquaintance with them began in his native country.

Some remote origin for the most superstitious or romantic popular illusions or vulgar errors may often be discovered. In Ireland, the old churches and church-yards have been usually fixed upon as the scenes of wonders. Now the antiquarians tell us, that near the ancient churches in that kingdom, caves of various constructions have from time to time been discovered, which were formerly used as granaries or magazines by the ancient inhabitants, and as places to which they retreated in time of danger. There is (page 84 of the R. I. A. Transactions for 1789) a particular account of a number of these artificial caves at the West end of the church of Killossy, in the county of Kildare. Under a rising ground, in a dry sandy soil, these subterraneous dwellings were found: they have pediment roofs, and they communicate with each other by small apertures. In the Brehon laws these are mentioned, and there are fines inflicted by those laws upon persons who steal from the subterraneous granaries. All these things show, that there was a real foundation for the stories which were told of the appearance of lights, and of the sounds of voices near these places. The persons who had property concealed there very willingly countenanced every wonderful relation, that tended to make these places objects of sacred awe, or superstitious terror.

Page 81. *Weed-ashes.*—By ancient usage in Ireland, all the weeds on a farm belonged to the farmer's wife, or to the wife of the squire who holds the ground in his own hands. The great demand for alkaline salts in bleaching rendered these ashes no inconsiderable perquisite.

Page 81. *Sealing money.*—Formerly it was the custom in Ireland for tenants to give the squire's lady from two to fifty guineas as a perquisite upon the sealing of their leases. The Editor not very long

since knew of a baronet's lady accepting fifty guineas as sealing money, upon closing a bargain for a considerable farm.

Page 81. *Sir Murtagh grew mad.*—Sir Murtagh grew angry.

The whole kitchen was out on the stairs—Means that all the inhabitants of the kitchen came out of the kitchen and stood upon the stairs. These, and similar expressions, show how much the Irish are disposed to metaphor and amplification.

Page 83. *Fining down the yearly rent.*—When an Irish gentleman, like Sir Kit Rackrent, has lived beyond his income, and finds himself distressed for ready money, tenants obligingly offer to take his land at a rent far below the value, and to pay him a small sum of money in hand, which they call fining down the yearly rent. The temptation of this ready cash often blinds the landlord to his future interest.

Page 83. *Driver.*—A man who is employed to drive tenants for rent; that is, to drive the cattle belonging to tenants to pound. The office of driver is by no means a sinecure.

Page 83. *I thought to make him a priest.*—It was customary amongst those of Thady's rank in Ireland, whenever they could get a little money, to send their sons abroad to St. Omer's or to Spain, to be educated as priests. Now they are educated at Minnouth. The Editor has lately known a young lad, who began by being a post-boy, afterwards turn into a carpenter; then quit his plane and work-bench to study his *Humanities*, as he said, at the college of Minnouth; but after he had gone through his course of Humanities, he determined to be a soldier instead of a priest.

Page 85. *Flam.*—Short for flambeau.

Page 86. *Barrack-room.*—Formerly it was customary, in gentlemen's houses in Ireland, to fit up one large bedchamber with a number of beds for the reception of occasional visitors. These rooms were called Barrack rooms.

Page 86. *An innocent*—in Ireland, means a simpleton, an idiot.

Page 90. *The curragh*—is the Newmarket of Ireland.

Page 90. *The cant.*—The auction.

Page 94. *And so should cut him off for ever, by levying a fine, and suffering a recovery to dock the entail.*—The English reader may perhaps be surprised at the extent of Thady's legal knowledge, and at the fluency with which he pours forth law terms; but almost every poor man in Ireland, be he farmer, weaver, shop-keeper, or steward, is, beside his other occupations, occasionally a lawyer. The nature of processes, ejectments, custodiams, injunctions, replevins, &c. are perfectly known to them, and the terms as familiar to them as to any attorney. They

all love law. It is a kind of lottery, in which every man, staking his own wit or cunning against his neighbour's property, feels that he has little to lose, and much to gain.

"I'll have the law of you, so I will!"—is the saying of an Englishman, who expects justice. "I'll have you before his honour"—is the threat of an Irishman, who hopes for partiality. Miserable is the life of a justice of the peace in Ireland the day after a fair, especially if he resides near a small town. The multitude of the *kilt* (*kilt* does not mean *killed*, but hurt) and wounded who come before his honour with black eyes or bloody heads, is astonishing: but more astonishing is the number of those who, though they are scarcely able by daily labour to procure daily food, will nevertheless, without the least reluctance, waste six or seven hours of the day lounging in the yard or hall of a justice of the peace, waiting to make some complaint about—nothing. It is impossible to convince them, that *time is money*. They do not set any value upon their own time, and they think that others estimate theirs at less than nothing. Hence they make no scruple of telling a justice of the peace a story of an hour long about a *tester* (sixpence): and if he grows impatient, they attribute it to some secret prejudice, which he entertains against them.

Their method is to get a story completely by heart, and to tell it, as they call it, *out of the face*, that is, from the beginning to the end, without interruption.

"Well, my good friend, I have seen you lounging about these three hours in the yard, what is your business?

"Please your honour, it is what I want to speak one word to your honour."

"Speak then, but be quick—What is the matter?

"The matter, please your honour, is nothing at-all-at-all, only just about the grazing of a horse, please your honour, that this man here sold me at the fair of Gurtishannon last Shrove fair, which lay down three times with myself, please your honour, and *kilt* me; not to be telling your honour of how, no later back than yesterday night, he lay down in the house there within, and all the childer standing round, and it was God's mercy he did not fall a'-top of them, or into the fire to burn himself. So please your honour, to-day I took him back to this man, which owned him, and after a great deal to do I got the mare again I *swopped* (*exchanged*) him for; but he won't pay the grazing of the horse for the time I had him, though he promised to pay the grazing in case the horse didn't answer; and he never did a day's work, good or bad, please your honour, all the time he was with me, and I had the doctor to him five times any how. And so, please your honour, it is what I expect your honour will stand my friend, for I'd sooner come to your honour for justice than to any other in all Ireland. And so I brought him here before your honour, and expect your honour will make him pay me the grazing, or tell me, can I process him for it at the next assizes, please your honour?"

The defendant now turning a quid of tobacco with his tongue into some secret cavern in his mouth, begins his defence with—

"Please your honour, under favour, and saving your honour's presence, there's not a word of truth in all this man has been saying from beginning to end, upon my conscience, and I wouldn't for the value of

the horse itself, grazing and all, be after telling your honour a lie. For, please your honour, I have a dependance upon your honour that you'll do me justice, and not be listening to him or the like of him. Please your honour, it's what he has brought me before your honour, because he had a spite against me about some oats I sold your honour, which he was jealous of, and a shawl his wife got at my shister's shop there without, and never paid for; so I offered to set the shawl against the grazing, and give him a receipt in full of all demands, but he wouldn't out of spite, please your honour; so he brought me before your honour, expecting your honour was mad with me for cutting down the tree in the horse park, which was none of my doing, please your honour—ill luck to them that went and belied me to your honour behind my back! —So if your honour is pleasing, I'll tell you the whole truth about the horse that he swopped against my mare, out of the face.—Last Shrove fair, I met this man, Jemmy Duffy, please your honour, just at the corner of the road, where the bridge is broken down, that your honour is to have the presentment for this year—long life to you for it!—And he was at that time coming from the fair of Gurtishannon, and I the same way. "How are you, Jemmy?" says I.—"Very well, I thank ye, kindly, Bryan," says he; "shall we turn back to Paddy Salmon's and take a naggin of whiskey to our better acquaintance?"—"I don't care if I did, Jemmy," says I; "only it is what I can't take the whiskey, because I am under an oath against it for a month." Ever since, please your honour, the day your honour met me on the road, and observed to me I could hardly stand, I had taken so much—though upon my conscience your honour wronged me greatly that same time—ill luck to them that belied me behind my back to your honour!—Well, please your honour, as I was telling you, as he was taking the whiskey and we talking of one thing or t'other, he makes me an offer to swop his mare that he couldn't sell at the fair of Gurtishannon, because nobody would be troubled with the beast, please your honour, against my horse, and to oblige him I took the mare—sorrow take her and him along with her!—She kicked me a new car, that was worth three pounds ten, to tatters the first time ever I put her into it, and I expect your honour will make him pay me the price of the car, any how, before I pay the grazing, which I've no right to pay at-all-at-all, only to oblige him.—But I leave it all to your honour—and the whole grazing he ought to be charging for the beast is but two and eight-pence half-penny, any how, please your honour. So I'll abide by what your honour says, good or bad. I'll leave it all to your honour."

I'll leave *it* all to your honour—literally means, I'll leave all the trouble to your honour.

The Editor knew a justice of the peace in Ireland, who had such a dread of *having it all left to his honour*, that he frequently gave the complainants the sum about which they were disputing, to make peace between them, and to get rid of the trouble of hearing their stories *out of the face*. But he was soon cured of this method of buying off disputes, by the increasing multitude of those, who, out of pure regard to his honour, came "to get justice from him, because they would sooner come before him than before any man in all Ireland."

Page 102. *A raking pot of tea.*—We should observe, this custom

has long since been banished from the higher orders of Irish gentry. The mysteries of a raking pot of tea, like those of the Bona Dea, are supposed to be sacred to females; but now and then it has happened, that some of the male species, who were either more audacious or more highly favoured than the rest of their sex, have been admitted by stealth to these orgies. The time when the festive ceremony begins varies according to circumstances, but it is never earlier than twelve o'clock at night; the joys of a raking pot of tea depending on its being made in secret, and at an unseasonable hour. After a ball, when the more discreet part of the company has departed to rest, a few chosen female spirits, who have footed it till they can foot it no longer, and till the sleepy notes expire under the slurring hand of the musician, retire to a bed-chamber, call the favourite maid, who alone is admitted, bid her *put down the kettle*, lock the door, and amidst as much giggling and scrambling as possible, they get round a tea-table, on which all manner of things are huddled together. Then begin mutual railleries and mutual confidences amongst the young ladies, and the faint scream and the loud laugh is heard, and the romping for letters and pocket-books begins, and gentlemen are called by their surnames, or by the general name of fellows! pleasant fellows! charming fellows! odious fellows! abominable fellows! and then all prudish decorums are forgotten, and then we might be convinced how much the satirical poet was mistaken when he said,

"There is no woman where there's no reserve."

The merit of the original idea of a raking pot of tea evidently belongs to the washerwoman and the laundry-maid. But why should not we have *Low life above stairs*, as well as *High life below stairs*?

Page 102. *We gained the day by his piece of honesty.*—In a dispute which occurred some years ago in Ireland, between Mr. E. and Mr. M., about the boundaries of a farm, an old tenant of Mr. M.'s cut a *sod* from Mr. E.'s land, and inserted it in a spot prepared for its reception in Mr. M.'s land; so nicely was it inserted, that no eye could detect the junction of the grass. The old man who was to give his evidence as to the property, stood upon the inserted sod when the *viewers* came, and swore that the ground he *then stood upon* belonged to his landlord, Mr. M.

The Editor had flattered himself that the ingenious contrivance which Thady records, and the similar subterfuge of this old Irishman, in the dispute concerning boundaries, were instances of *'cuteness* unparalleled in all but Irish story: an English friend, however, has just mortified the Editor's national vanity by an account of the following custom, which prevails in part of Shropshire. It is discreditable for women to appear abroad after the birth of their children, till they have been *churched*. To avoid this reproach, and at the same time to enjoy the pleasure of gadding, whenever a woman goes abroad before she has been to church, she takes a tile from the roof of her house, and puts it upon her head; wearing this panoply all the time she pays her visits, her conscience is perfectly at ease; for she can afterwards safely declare to the clergyman, that she 'has never been from under her own roof till she came to be churched.'

Page 104. *Carton, or half Carton.*—Thady means cartron or

half cartron. " According to the old record in the black book of Dublin a *cantred* is said to contain 30 *villatas terras*, which are also called *quarters* of land (quarterons, *cartrons*); every one of which quarters must contain so much ground as will pasture 400 cows, and 17 plough-lands. A knight's fee was composed of 8 hydes, which amount to 160 acres, and that is generally deemed about a *plough-land.*"

The Editor was favoured by a learned friend with the above extract, from a MS. of Lord Totness's in the Lambeth library.

Page 117. *Wake.*—A wake, in England, means a festival held upon the anniversary of the Saint of the parish. At these wakes, rustic games, rustic conviviality, and rustic courtship, are pursued with all the ardour and all the appetite, which accompanies such pleasures as occur but seldom.—In Ireland a wake is a midnight meeting, held professedly for the indulgence of holy sorrow, but usually it is converted into orgies of unholy joy. When an Irish man or woman of the lower order dies, the straw which composed his bed, whether it has been contained in a bag to form a mattress, or simply spread upon the earthen floor, is immediately taken out of the house, and burned before the cabin door, the family at the same time setting up the death howl. The ears and eyes of the neighbours being thus alarmed, they flock to the house of the deceased, and by their vociferous sympathy excite and at the same time soothe the sorrows of the family.

It is curious to observe how good and bad are mingled in human institutions. In countries which were thinly inhabited, this custom prevented private attempts, against the lives of individuals, and formed a kind of coroner's inquest upon the body which had recently expired, and burning the straw upon which the sick man lay became a simple preservative against infection. At night the dead body is waked, that is to say, all the friends and neighbours of the deceased collect in a barn or stable, where the corpse is laid upon some boards, or an unhinged door, supported upon stools, the face exposed, the rest of the body covered with a white sheet. Round the body are stuck in brass candlesticks, which have been borrowed perhaps at five miles' distance, as many candles as the poor person can beg or borrow, observing always to have an odd number. Pipes and tobacco are first distributed, and then, according to the *ability* of the deceased, cakes and ale, and sometimes whiskey, are *dealt* to the company:

> " Deal on, deal on, my merry men all,
> Deal on your cakes and your wine,
> For whatever is dealt at her funeral to-day
> Shall be dealt to-morrow at mine."

After a fit of universal sorrow, and the comfort of a universal dram, the scandal of the neighbourhood, as in higher circles, occupies the company. The young lads and lasses romp with one another, and when the fathers and mothers are at last overcome with sleep and whiskey, *(vino & somno)* the youth become more enterprising, and are frequently successful. It is said, that more matches are made at wakes than at weddings

Page 119. *Kilt.*—This word frequently occurs in the preceding pages, where it means not *killed*, but much *hurt*. In Ireland, not only cowards, but the brave " die many times before their death." *There killing is no murder.*

LEONORA.

LEONORA.

"——Il cieco scoglio
E quel ch'inganna i marinari ancora
Piu saggi. Chi non sa finger l'amico,
Non e fiero nemico."

LETTER I. LADY OLIVIA TO LADY LEONORA L——

April 25, 18—

WHAT a misfortune it is to be born a woman! In vain, dear Leonora, would you reconcile me to my doom. Condemned o incessant hypocrisy, or everlasting misery, woman is the lave or the outcast of society. Confidence in our fellow reatures, or in ourselves, alike forbidden us, to what purpose ave we understandings, which we may not use? hearts, hich we may not trust? To our unhappy sex genius and ensibility are the most treacherous gifts of Heaven. Why hould we cultivate talents merely to gratify the caprice of rants? Why seek for knowledge which can prove only, at our wretchedness is irremediable? If a ray of light reak in upon us, it is but to make darkness more visible, to how us the narrow limits, the Gothic structure, the impenerable barriers of our prison. Forgive me if on this subject cannot speak—if I cannot think—with patience. Is it not abled, that the gods, to punish some refractory mortal of the ale kind, doomed his soul to inhabit upon earth a female orm? A punishment more degrading, or more difficult to enlure, could scarcely be devised by cruelty omnipotent. What langers, what sorrows, what persecutions, what nameless evils wait the woman, who dares to rise above the prejudices of her sex?

"Ah! happy they, the happiest of their kind!"

who without a struggle, submit their reason to be swathed by all the absurd bandages of custom. What though they cripple or distort their minds; are not these deformities beauties in the eyes of fashion? and are not these people the favoured nurslings of the *World*, secure of her smiles, her caresses, her fostering praise, her partial protection, through all the dangers of youth and all the dotage of old age?

"Ah! happy they, the happiest of their kind!"

who learn to speak, and think, and act by rote; who have a phrase, or a maxim, or a formula ready for every occasion; who follow—

"All the nurse, and all the priest have taught."

And is it possible that Olivia can envy these *tideless-blooded* souls their happiness, their apathy? Is her high spirit so broken by adversity? Not such the promise of her early years, not such the language of her unsophisticated heart! Alas! I scarcely know, I scarcely recollect, that proud self, which was wont to defy the voice of opinion, and to set at nought the decrees of prejudice. The events of my life shall be related, or rather the history of my sensations; for in a life like mine sensations become events; a metamorphosis which you will see in every page of my history. I feel an irresistible impulse to open my whole heart to you, my dear Leonora. I ought to be awed by the superiority of your understanding and of your character, yet there is an indulgence in your nature, a softness in your temper, that dissipates fear, and irresistibly attracts confidence.

You have generously refused to be prejudiced against me by busy, malignant rumour; you have resolved to judge of me for yourself. Nothing, then, shall be concealed. In such circumstances I cannot seek to extenuate any of my faults or follies. I am ready to acknowledge them all with self-humiliation more poignant than the sarcasms of my bitterest enemies. But I must pause till I have summoned courage for my confession. Dear Leonora, adieu. OLIVIA.

LETTER II. OLIVIA TO LEONORA.

April 30th.

FULL of life and spirits, with a heart formed for all the enthusiasm, for all the delicacy of love, I married early, in the fond expectation of meeting a heart suited to my own.—Cruelly disappointed, I found—merely a husband. My heart recoiled upon itself; true to my own principles of virtue, I scorned dissimulation. I candidly confessed to my husband,

that my love was extinguished. I proved to him, alas! too clearly, that we were not born for each other. The attractive moment of illusion was past—never more to return. The repulsive reality remained. The living was chained to the dead, and by the inexorable tyranny of English laws, that chain, eternally galling to innocence, can be severed only by the desperation of vice. Divorce, according to our barbarous institutions, cannot be obtained without guilt. Appalled at the thought, I saw no hope but in submission. Yet to submit to live with the man I could not love, was, to a mind like mine, impossible. My principles and my feelings equally revolted from this legal prostitution. We separated. I sought for balm to my wounded heart in foreign climes.

To the beauties of nature I was ever feelingly alive. Amidst the sublime scenes of Switzerland, and on the consecrated borders of her classic lakes, I sometimes forgot myself to happiness. Felicity, how transient!—transient as the day-dreams that played upon my fancy in the bright morning of love. Alas! not all creation's charms could soothe me to repose. I wandered in search of that, which change of place could not afford. There was an aching void in my heart—an indescribable sadness over my spirits. Sometimes I had recourse to books; but how few were in unison with my feelings, or touched the trembling chords of my disordered mind!—Common place morality I could not endure. History presented nothing but a mass of crimes. Metaphysics promised some relief, and I bewildered myself in their not inelegant labyrinth. But to the bold genius and exquisite pathos of some German novelists I hold myself indebted for my largest portion of ideal bliss; for those rapt moments, when sympathy with kindred souls transported me into better worlds, and consigned vulgar realities to oblivion.

I am well aware, my Leonora, that you approve not of these my favourite writers: but yours is the morality of one who has never known sorrow. I also would interdict such cordials to the happy.—But would you forbid those to taste felicity in dreams, who feel only misery when awake? Would you dash the cup of Lethe from lips, to which no other beverage is salubrious or sweet?

By the use of these opiates my soul gradually settled into a sort of pleasing pensive melancholy. Has it not been said that melancholy is a characteristic of genius? I make no pretensions to genius: but I am persuaded that melancholy is the habitual, perhaps the natural state of those who have the misfortune to feel with delicacy.

You, my dear Leonora, will class this notion amongst what you once called my refined errors.—Indeed I must confess, that I see in you an exception so striking as almost to compel

me to relinquish my theory. But again let me remind you, that your lot in life has been different from mine. Alas! how different! Why had not I such a friend, such a mother as yours, early to direct my uncertain steps and to educate me to happiness? I might have been . . . But no matter what I might have been! . . . I must tell you what I have been.

Separated from my husband, without a guide, without a friend at the most perilous period of my life, I was left to that most insidious of counsellors—my own heart—my own weak heart. When I was least prepared to resist the impression, it was my misfortune to meet with a man of a soul congenial to my own. Before I felt my danger, I was entangled beyond the possibility of escape. The net was thrown over my heart; its struggles were to no purpose, but to exhaust my strength. Virtue commanded me to be miserable—and I was miserable. But do I dare to expect your pity, Leonora, for such an attachment? It excites your indignation, perhaps your horror. Blame, despise, detest me; all this would I rather bear than deceive you into fancying me better than I really am.

Do not, however, think me worse. If my views have been less pure, if I had felt less reliance on the firmness of my own principles, and less repugnance to artifice, I might easily have avoided some appearances, which have injured me in the eyes of the world. With real contrition I confess, that a fatal mixture of masculine independence of spirit, and of female tenderness of heart, has betrayed me into many imprudences; but of vice, and of that meanest species of vice, hypocrisy, I thank Heaven, my conscience can acquit me. All I have now to hope is, that you my indulgent, my generous Leonora, will not utterly condemn me. Truth and gratitude are my only claims to your friendship—to a friendship which would be to me the first of earthly blessings, which might make me amends for all I have lost. Consider this before, unworthy as I am, you reject me from your esteem. Counsel, guide, save me! Without vanity, but with confidence I say it, I have a heart that will repay you for affection. You will find me easily moved, easily governed by kindness. Yours has already sunk deep into my soul, and your power is unlimited over the affections, and over the understanding of

Your obliged OLIVIA.

LETTER III. FROM LADY LEONORA L—— TO HER MOTHER THE DUCHESS OF ——, INCLOSING THE PRECEDING LETTERS.

May 2d.

I AM permitted to send you, my dear mother, the inclosed letters. Mixed with what you may not approve, you will, I think, find in them proofs of an affectionate heart and superior abilities. Lady Olivia has just returned to England. Scandal, imported from the Continent, has had such an effect in prejudicing many of her former friends and acquaintance against her, that she is in danger of being excluded from that society of which she was once the ornament and the favourite: but I am determined to support her cause, and to do every thing in my power to counteract the effects of malignity. I cannot sufficiently express the indignation, that I feel against the mischievous spirit of scandal, which destroys happiness at every breath, and which delights in the meanest of all malignant feelings, the triumph over the errors of superior characters. Olivia has been much blamed, because she has been much envied.

Indeed, my dear mother, you have been prejudiced against her by false reports. Do not imagine that her fascinating manners have blinded my judgment: I assure you that I have discerned, or rather that she has revealed to me, all her faults; and ought not this candour to make a strong impression upon my mind in her favour? Consider how young, how beautiful she was at her first entrance into fashionable life; how much exposed to temptation, surrounded by flatterers, and without a single friend. I am persuaded that she would have escaped all censure, and would have avoided all the errors with which she now reproaches herself, if she had been blessed with a mother such as mine. LEONORA L——.

LETTER IV. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO HER DAUGHTER.

MY DEAREST CHILD, May 5th.

I MUST answer your last before I sleep—before I can sleep in peace. I have just finished reading the rhapsody which it inclosed; and whilst my mind is full and warm upon the subject, let me write, for I can write to my own satisfaction at no other time. I admire and love you, my child, for the generous indignation you express against those who trample upon the fallen, or who meanly triumph over the errors of superior genius; and if I seem more cold, or more severe, than you wish me to be, attribute this to my anxiety for your happiness, and to that caution which is perhaps the infirmity of age.

In the course of my long life I have, alas! seen Vice and Folly dressed in so many different fashions, that I can find no difficulty in detecting them under any disguise; but your unpractised eyes are almost as easily deceived as when you were five years old, and when you could not believe that your pasteboard Nun was the same person in her various changes of attire.

Nothing would tempt you to associate with those who have avowed themselves regardless of right and wrong; but I must warn you against another, and a far more dangerous class, who professing the most refined delicacy of sentiment, and boasting of invulnerable virtue, exhibit themselves in the most improper and hazardous situations; and who, because they are without fear, expect to be deemed free from reproach. Either from miraculous good fortune, or from a singularity of temper, these adventurous heroines may possibly escape with what they call perfect innocence.—So much the worse for society.—Their example tempts others, who fall a sacrifice to their weakness and folly. I would punish the tempters in this case more than the victims, and for them the most effectual species of punishment is contempt. Neglect is death to these female lovers of notoriety. The moment they are out of fashion, their power to work mischief ceases. Those who from their character and rank have influence over public opinion, are bound to consider these things in the choice of their associates. This is peculiarly necessary in days when attempts are made to level all distinctions. You have sometimes hinted to me, my dear daughter, with all proper delicacy, that I am too strict in my notions, and that, unknown to myself, my pride mixes with morality. Be it so: the pride of family, and the pride of virtue, should reciprocally support each other. Were I asked what I think the best guard to a nobility in this, or in any other country, I should answer, VIRTUE. I admire that simple epitaph in Westminster Abbey on the Duchess of Newcastle:—"Her name was Margaret Lucas, youngest sister to the Lord Lucas of Colchester;—a noble family, for all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters virtuous."

I look to the temper of the times in forming rules for conduct. Of late years we have seen wonderful changes in female manners. I may be like the old Marquis in Gil Blas, who contended that even the peaches of modern days had deteriorated: but I fear that my complaints of the degeneracy of human kind are better founded than his fears for the vegetable creation. A taste for the elegant profligacy of French gallantry was, I remember, introduced into this country before the destruction of the French monarchy. Since that time, some sentimental writers and pretended philosophers of

our own and foreign countries have endeavoured to confound all our ideas of morality. To every rule of right they have found exceptions, and on these they have fixed the public attention by adorning them with all the splendid decorations of eloquence; so that the rule is despised or forgotten, and the exception triumphantly established in its stead. These orators seem as if they had been fed by Satan to plead the cause of Vice; and as if possessed by the evil spirit, they speak with a vehemence which carries away their auditors, or with a subtlety which deludes their better judgment. They put extreme cases, in which virtue may become vice, or vice virtue; they exhibit criminal passions in constant connexion with the most exalted, the most amiable virtues; thus making use of the best feelings of human nature for the worst purposes, they engage pity or admiration perpetually on the side of guilt. Eternally talking of philosophy and philanthropy, they only borrow the terms to perplex the ignorant and seduce the imaginative. They have their systems and their theories, and in theory they pretend that the general good of society is their sole immutable rule of morality, and in practice they make the variable feelings of each individual the judges of this general good. Their systems disdain all the vulgar virtues, intent upon some *beau ideal* of perfection or perfectibility. They set common sense and common honesty at defiance. No matter:—their doctrine, so convenient to the passions and soporific to the conscience, can never want partizans: especially by weak and enthusiastic women it is adopted and propagated with eagerness; then they become personages of importance, and zealots in support of their sublime opinions: —and they can read; and they can write; and they can talk, and they can *effect a revolution in public opinion!* I am afraid, indeed, that they can: for of late years we have heard more of sentiment than of principles; more of the rights of woman than of her duties. We have seen talents disgraced by the conduct of their possessors, and perverted in the vain attempt to defend what is unjustifiable.

Where must all this end?—where the abuse of reason inevitably ends, in the ultimate law of force. If in this age of reason women make a bad use of that power which they have obtained by the cultivation of their understanding, they will degrade and enslave themselves beyond redemption; they will reduce their sex to a situation worse than it ever experienced even in the ages of ignorance and superstition. If men find that the virtue of women diminishes in proportion as intellectual cultivation increases, they will connect, fatally for the freedom and happiness of our sex, the ideas of female ignorance and female innocence; they will decide that one is

the effect of the other. They will not pause to distinguish between the use and the abuse of reason; they will not stand by to see further experiments tried at their expense, but they will prohibit knowledge altogether as a pernicious commodity, and will exert all the superior power which nature and society place in their hands, to enforce their decrees. Opinion obtained freedom for women; by opinion they may be again enslaved. It is therefore the interest of the female world, and of society, that women should be deterred by the dread of shame from passing the bounds of discretion. No false lenity, no partiality in favour of amusing talents or agreeable manners, should admit of exceptions which become dangerous examples of impunity. The rank and superior understanding of a *delinquent* ought not to be considered in mitigation, but as aggravating circumstances. Rank makes ill conduct more conspicuous: talents make it more dangerous. Women of abilities, if they err, usually employ all their powers to justify, rather than to amend their faults. Other women go wrong from weakness, they from principle.

I am afraid, my dear daughter, that my general arguments are closing round your Olivia. But I must bid you a good night, for my poor eyes will serve me no longer. God bless you, my dear child,

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LETTER V. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

May 12th.

I AGREE with you, my dear mother, that in these times especially it is incumbent upon all persons, whose rank or reputation may influence public opinion, to be particularly careful to support the cause of female honour, of virtue, and religion. With the same object in view, we may however differ in the choice of means for its attainment. Pleasure as well as pain acts upon human creatures; and therefore in governing them, may not reward be full as efficacious as punishment? Our sex are sufficiently apprised of the fatal consequences of ill conduct; the advantages of well-earned reputation should be at least as great, as certain, and as permanent.

In former times, a single finger pointed at the scutcheon of a knight challenged him to defend his fame; but the defiance was open, the defence was public; and if the charge proved groundless, it injured none but the malicious accuser. In our days female reputation, which is of a nature more delicate than the honour of any knight, may be destroyed by the finger of private malice. The whisper of secret scandal, which admits of no fair or public answer, is too often sufficient to dis-

honour a life of spotless fame. This is the height, not only of injustice, but of impolicy. Women will become indifferent to reputation, which it is so difficult, even by the prudence of years to acquire, and which it is so easy to lose in a moment, by the malice or thoughtlessness of those who invent or who repeat scandal.—Those who call themselves the world, often judge without listening to evidence, and proceed upon suspicion with as much promptitude and severity as if they had the most convincing proofs. But because Cæsar, nearly two thousand years ago, said, that a woman ought not even to be suspected, and divorced his wife upon the strength of this sentiment, shall we make it a general maxim, that suspicion justifies punishment? We might as well applaud those, who when their friends are barely suspected to be tainted with the plague, drive them from all human comfort and assistance.

Even where women, from the thoughtless gaiety of youth, or the impulse of inexperienced enthusiasm, may have given some slight cause for censure, I would not have Virtue put on all her gorgon terrors, nor appear circled by the vengeful band of prudes; her chastening hand will be more beneficially felt if she wear her more benign form. To place the imprudent in the same class with the vicious, is injustice and impolicy: were the same punishment and the same disgrace to be affixed to small and to great offences, the number of *capital* offenders would certainly increase. Those who are disposed to yield to their passions, would, when they had once failed in exact decorum, see no motive, no fear to restrain them; and there would be no pause, no interval between error and profligacy. Amongst females who have been imprudent, there are many things to be considered which ought to recommend them to mercy. The judge, when he is obliged to pronounce the immutable sentence of the law, often, with tears, wishes that it were in his power to mitigate the punishment; but the decisions of opinion may and must vary with circumstances, else the degree of reprobation which they inflict cannot be proportioned to the offence, or calculated for the good of society. Among the mitigating circumstances, I should be inclined to name even those which you bring in aggravation. Talents, and what is called genius, in our sex are often connected with a warmth of heart, an enthusiasm of temper, which expose to dangers from which the coldness of mediocrity is safe. In the illuminated palace of ice, the lights which render the spectacle splendid, and which raise the admiration of the beholders, endanger the fabric and tend to its destruction.

But you will tell me, my dear mother, that allusion is not argument—and I am almost afraid to proceed, lest you should

think me an advocate for vice. I would not shut the gates of mercy, inexorably and indiscriminately, upon all those of my own sex, who have been even *more than prudent.*

> "He taught them shame, the sudden sense of ill—
> Shame, Nature's hasty conscience, which forbids
> Weak inclination ere it grows to will,
> Or stays rash will before it grows to deeds."

Whilst a woman is alive to shame, she cannot be dead to virtue. But, by injudicious or incessant reproach, this principle, even where it is most exquisite, may be most easily destroyed. The mimosa, when too long exposed to each rude touch, loses its retractile sensibility. It ought surely to be the care of the wise and benevolent to cherish that principle, implanted in our nature as the guard of virtue, that principle upon which legislators rest the force of punishment, and all the grand interests of society.

My dear mother, perhaps you will be surprised at the style in which I have been writing, and you will smile at hearing your Leonora discuss the duties of legislators, and the grand interests of society. She has not done so from presumption or from affectation. She was alarmed by your supposing that her judgment was deluded by fascinating manners, and she determined to produce *general* arguments, to convince you that she is not actuated by particular prepossession. You see that I have at least some show of reason on *my* side. I have forborne to mention Olivia's name: but now that I have obviated, I hope by reasoning, the imputation of partiality, I may observe that all my arguments are strongly in her favour. She has been attacked by slander; *the world* has condemned her upon suspicion merely. She has been imprudent; but I repeat in the strongest terms, that I am *convinced of her innocence;* and that I should bitterly regret, that a woman with such an affectionate heart, such uncommon candour, and such superior abilities should be lost to society.

Tell me, my dear mother, that you are no longer in anxiety about the consequences of my attachment to Olivia.

Your affectionate daughter, LEONORA.

LETTER VI. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO HER DAUGHTER.

May 20th.

You lament, my dear child, that such an affectionate heart, such great abilities as Olivia's, should be lost to society. Before I sympathize in your pity, my judgment must be convinced that it is reasonable.

What proofs has Lady Olivia given of her affectionate heart? She is at variance with both her parents; she is sep-

arated from her husband; and she leaves her child in a foreign country, to be educated by strangers. Am I to understand, that her Ladyship's neglecting to perform the duties of a daughter, a wife, and a mother, are proofs of an affectionate heart? As to her superior talents, do they contribute to her own happiness, or to the happiness of others? Evidently not to her own; for, by her account of herself, she is one of the most miserable wretches alive! She tells you that "*she went to foreign climes in search of balm for a wounded heart, and wandered from place to place, looking for what no place could afford.*" She talks of "*indescribable sadness—an aching void—an impenetrable prison—darkness visible—dead bodies chained to living ones;* and she exhibits all the disordered furniture of a "diseased mind." But you say, that though her powers are thus insufficient to make herself happy, they may amuse or instruct the world; and of this I am to judge by the letters which you have sent me. You admire fine writing; so do I. I class eloquence high amongst the fine arts. But by eloquence I mean something more than Dr. Johnson defines it to be, "the art of speaking with fluency and elegance."—This is an art which is now possessed to a certain degree by every boarding-school Miss. Every scribbling young lady can now string sentences and sentiments together, and can turn a period harmoniously. Upon the strength of these accomplishments they commence heroines: and claim the privileges of the order; privileges which go to an indefinite and most alarming extent. Every heroine may have her own code of morality for her private use, and she is to be tried by no other; she may rail as loudly as she pleases "at the barbarous institutions of society," and may deplore "*the inexorable tyranny of the English laws.*" If she find herself involved in delicate entanglements of crossing duties, she may break through any one, or all of them, to extricate herself with a noble contempt of prejudice.

I have promised to reason calmly; but I cannot repress the terror which I feel at the idea of my daughter's becoming the friend of one of these women. Olivia's letters are, I think, in the true heroine style: and they might make a brilliant figure in a certain class of novels. She begins with a bold exclamation on "the misfortune of being born a woman!—*the slave or the outcast of society, condemned to incessant hypocrisy!*" Does she mean modesty? Her manly soul feels it "*the most degrading punishment that omnipotent cruelty could devise, to be imprisoned in a female form.*" From such a masculine spirit some fortitude and magnanimity might be expected; but presently she begs to be pitied, for a broken spirit and more than female tenderness of heart. I have observed

that the ladies, who wish to be men, are usually those who have not sufficient strength of mind to be women.

Olivia proceeds in an ironical strain to envy, as "*the happiest of their sex, those who submit to be swathed by custom.*" These persons she stigmatizes with the epithet of *tideless-blooded.* It is the common trick of unprincipled women to affect to despise those who conduct themselves with propriety. Prudence they term *coldness;* fortitude, *insensibility;* and regard to the rights of others, *prejudice.* By this perversion of terms they would laugh or sneer virtue out of countenance; and by robbing her of all praise, they would deprive her of all immediate motive.—Conscious of their own degradation, they would lower every thing, and every body to their own standard: they would make you believe, that those who have not yielded to their passions, are destitute of sensibility; that the love, which is not blazoned forth in glaring colours, is not entitled to our sympathy.—The sacrifice of the strongest feelings of the human heart to a sense of duty is to be called mean, or absurd; but the shameless phrenzy of passion, exposing itself to public gaze, is to be an object of admiration. These heroines talk of strength of mind; but they forget that strength of mind is to be shown in resisting their passions, not in yielding to them. Without being absolutely of an opinion, which I have heard maintained, that all virtue is sacrifice, I am convinced, that the essential characteristic of virtue is to bear and forbear. These sentimentalists can do neither. They talk of sacrifices and generosity; but they are the veriest egotists—the most selfish creatures alive.

Open your eyes, my dear Leonora, and see things as they really are. Lady Olivia thinks it a sufficient excuse for abandoning her husband, to say, that she found "*his soul was not in unison with hers.*" She thinks it an adequate apology for a criminal attachment, to tell you that "*the net was thrown over her heart before she felt her danger; that all its struggles were to no purpose, but to exhaust her strength.*"

If she did not feel her danger, she prepared it.—The course of reading which her ladyship followed, was the certain preparation for her consequent conduct. She tells us that she could not endure "*the common-place of morality, but metaphysics promised her some relief.*" In these days a heroine need not be a moralist, but she must be a metaphysician. She must "*wander in the not inelegant labyrinth;*" and if in the midst of it she comes unawares upon the monster Vice, she must not start, though she have no clue to secure her retreat.

From metaphysics Lady Olivia went on to German novels. "*For her largest portions of bliss, for those wrapt moments, which consigned vulgar realities to oblivion,*" she owns herself indebted to those writers, who promise an ideal world of

pleasure, which, like the *mirage* in the desart, bewilders the feverish imagination. I always suspected the imagination of these *women of feeling* to be more susceptible than their hearts. They want excitation for their morbid sensibility, and they care not at what expense it is procured. If they could make all the pleasures of life into one cordial, they would swallow it at a draught in a fit of sentimental spleen. The mental intemperance that they indulge in promiscuous novel-reading, destroys all vigour and clearness of judgment, every thing dances in the varying medium of their imagination. Sophistry passes for reason; nothing appears profound but what is obscure; nothing sublime but what is beyond the reach of mortal comprehension. To their vitiated taste the simple pathos which o'ersteps not the modesty of nature, appears cold, tame and insipid; they must have *scenes* and a *coup de theatre;* and ranting and raving, and stabbing, and drowning, and poisoning; for with them there is no love without murder. Love, in their representations, is indeed a distorted, ridiculous, horrid monster, from whom common sense, taste, decency, and nature recoil.

But I will be calm.—You say, my dear Leonora, that your judgment has not been blinded by Lady Olivia's fascinating manners; but that you are strongly influenced in her favour by that candour, with which she has revealed to you all her faults. The value of candour in individuals should be measured by their sensibility to shame. When a woman throws off all restraint, and then desires me to admire her candour, I am astonished only at her assurance. Do not be the dupe of such candour. Lady Olivia avows a criminal passion, yet you say that you have no doubts of her innocence. The persuasion of your unsuspecting heart is no argument: when you give me any proofs in her favour, I shall pay them all due attention. In the mean time I have given you my opinion of those ladies, who place themselves in the most perilous situations, and then expect you to believe them safe.

Olivia's professions of regard for you are indeed enthusiastic. She tells you that "*your power is unlimited over her heart and understanding; that your friendship would be to her one of the greatest of earthly blessings.*" May be so—but I cannot wish you to be her friend. With whatever confidence she makes the assertion, do not believe that she has a heart capable of feeling the value of yours. These sentimental, unprincipled women make the worst friends in the world. We are often told that, "poor creatures! they do nobody any harm but themselves;" but in society it is scarcely possible for a woman to do harm to herself without doing harm to others; all her connexions must be involved in the consequences of her imprudence. Besides, what confidence can you re-

pose in them? If you should happen to be an obstacle in the way of any of their fancies, do you think that they will respect you or your interests, when they have not scrupled to sacrifice their own to the gratification of their passions? Do you think, that the gossamer of sentiment will restrain those whom the strong chains of prudence could not hold?

O! my dearest child, forcibly as these arguments carry conviction to my mind, I dread lest your compassionate generous temper should prevent their reaching your understanding. Then let me conjure you, by all the respect which you have ever shown for your mother's opinions, by all that you hold dear or sacred, beware of forming an intimacy with an unprincipled woman. Believe me to be

Your truly affectionate mother, ———

LETTER VII. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

May 27th.

No daughter ever felt more respect for the opinions of a parent than I do for yours, my dearest mother; but you have never, even from childhood, required from me a blind submission; you have always encouraged me to desire conviction. And now, when the happiness of another is at stake, you will forgive me if I am less disposed to yield than I should be, I hope, if my own interest or taste were alone concerned.

You ask me what proofs I have of Lady Olivia's innocence. Believe me, I have such as are convincing to my unbiassed judgment, and such as would be sufficient to satisfy all your doubts, were I at liberty to lay the whole truth before you. But even to exculpate herself, Olivia will not ruin in your opinion her husband, of whom you imagine that she has no reason to complain. I, who know how anxious she is to obtain your esteem, can appreciate the sacrifice that she makes; and in this instance as in many others I admire her magnanimity: it is equal to her candour, for which she is entitled to praise even by your own principles, dear mother: since far from having *thrown off all restraint*, she is exquisitely susceptible of shame.

As to her understanding—have no persons of great talents ever been unfortunate? Frequently we see that they have not been able, by all their efforts and all their powers, to remedy the defects in the characters and tempers of those with whom they have unhappily been connected. Olivia married very young, and was unfortunately mistaken in her choice of a husband: on that subject I can only deplore her error and its consequences: but as to her disagreements with her own *family*, I do not think her to blame. For the mistakes we

make in the choice of lovers or friends we may be answerable, but we cannot be responsible for the faults of the relations who are given to us by nature. If we do not please them it may be our misfortune; it is not necessarily our fault. I cannot be more explicit, without betraying Lady Olivia's confidence, and implicating others in defending her.

With respect to that attachment of which you speak with so much just severity, she has given me the strongest assurances, that she will do every thing in her power to conquer it. Absence, you know, is the first and the most difficult step, and this she has taken. Her course of reading displeases you: I cannot defend it: but I am persuaded that it is not a proof of her taste being vitiated. Many people read ordinary novels as others take snuff, merely from habit, from the want of petty excitation; and not, as you suppose, from the want of exorbitant or improper stimulus. Those who are unhappy have recourse to any trifling amusement, that can change the course of their thoughts. I do not justify Olivia for having chosen such *comforters* as certain novels, but I pity her, and impute this choice to want of fortitude, not to depravity of taste. Before she married, a strict injunction was laid upon her, not to read any book that was called a novel: this raised in her mind a sort of perverse curiosity. By making any books or opinions contraband, the desire to read and circulate them is increased; bad principles are consequently smuggled into families, and being kept secret, can never be subject to fair examination. I think it must be advantageous to the right side of any question, that all which can be said against it should be openly heard, that it may be answered. I do not

"Hate when Vice can bolt her arguments,"

for I know that Virtue has a tongue to answer her. The more she repeats her assertions the better; because, when familiarized, their boldness will not astound the understanding, and the charm of novelty will not be mistaken for the power of truth. We may observe, that the admiration for the class of writers to whom you allude, though violent in its commencement, has abated since they have been more known; and numbers, who began with rapture, have ended with disgust. Persons of vivacious imaginations, like Olivia, may be caught at first view by whatever has the appearance of grandeur or sublimity; but if time be allowed for examination, they will infallibly detect the disproportions, and these will ever afterwards shock their taste: if you will not allow leisure for comparison; if you say, do not look at such strange objects, the obedient eyes may turn aside, but the rebel imagination pictures something a thousand times more wonderful and charming than the reality. I will venture to predict, that

Olivia will soon be tired of the species of novels which she now admires, and that, once surfeited with these books, and convinced of their pernicious effects, she will never relapse into the practice of novel reading.

As to her taste for metaphysical books . . . . Dear mother I am very daring to differ with you in so many points . . . . but permit me to say, that I do not agree with you in detesting metaphysics. People may lose themselves in that labyrinth, but why should they meet with vice in the midst of it? The characters of a moralist, a practical moralist, and a metaphysician, are not incompatible, as we may see in many amiable and illustrious examples. To examine human motives, and the nature of the human mind, is not to destroy the power of virtue, or to increase the influence of vice. The chemist, after analyzing certain substances, and after discovering their constituent parts, can lay aside all that is heterogeneous, and recompound the substance in a purer state. From analogy we might infer, that the motives of metaphysicians ought to be purer than those of the vulgar and ignorant. To discover the art of converting base into noble passions, or to obtain a universal remedy for all mental diseases, is perhaps beyond the power of metaphysicians; but in the pursuit, useful discoveries may be made.

As to Olivia's letters—I am sorry I sent them to you; for I see that they have lowered, instead of raising her in your opinion. But if you criticise letters, written in openness and confidence of heart to a private friend, as if they were set before the tribunal of the public, you are . . . may I say it? not only severe but unjust; for you try and condemn the subjects of one country by the laws of another.

Dearest mother, be half as indulgent to Olivia as you are to me; indeed you are prejudiced against her; and because you see some faults, you think her whole character vicious. But would you cut down a fine tree because a leaf is withered, or because the canker-worm has eaten into the bud? Even if a main branch were decayed, are there not remedies which, skilfully applied, can save the tree from destruction, and perhaps restore it to its pristine beauty?

And now, having exhausted all my allusions, all my arguments, and all my little stock of eloquence, I must come to a plain matter of fact——

Before I received your letter I had invited Lady Olivia to spend some time at L—— castle. I fear that you will blame my precipitation, and I reproach myself for it, because I know it will give you pain. However, though you will think me imprudent, I am certain you would rather that I were imprudent than unjust. I have defended Olivia from what I believe to be unmerited censure; I have invited her to my

house; she has accepted my proffered kindness; to withdraw it afterwards would be doing her irreparable injury; it would confirm all that the world can suspect: it would be saying to the censorious—I am convinced that you are right, and I deliver your victim up to you.

Thus I should betray the person whom I undertook to defend: her confidence in me, her having but for a moment accepted my protection, would be her ruin. I could not act in so base a manner.

Fear nothing for me, my best, but too anxious friend. I may do Lady Olivia some good; she can do me no harm. She may learn the principles which you have taught me; I can never catch from her any tastes or habits which you would disapprove. As to the rest, I hazard little or nothing. The hereditary credit which I enjoy in my maternal right enables me to assist others without injury to myself.

Your affectionate daughter, LEONORA.

LETTER VIII. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO HER DAUGHTER.

MY DEAREST CHILD, June 2d.

I hope that you are in the right, and that I am in the wrong.

Your affectionate mother, ——

LETTER IX. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——

June 8th.

PPEPARE yourself, my ever dear and charming Gabrielle, for all the torments of jealousy. Know, that since I came to England I have formed a new friendship with a woman who is interesting in the extreme, who has charmed me by the simplicity of her manners and the generous sensibility of her heart. Her character is certainly too reserved: yet even this defect has perhaps increased her power over my imagination and consequently over my affections. I know not by what magic she has obtained it, but she has already an ascendancy over me, which would quite astonish *you*, who know my wayward fancies and independent spirit. Perhaps this magic is only, as Leonore de Galigai once said, "*the power which strong minds have over weak ones.*"

Alas! I confess my heart is weak indeed; and I fear that all the power of friendship and philosophy combined will never strengthen it sufficiently. Oh, Gabrielle! how can I hope to obliterate from my soul that attachment which has marked the colour of my destiny for years? Yet such cour-

age, such cruel courage is required of me, and of such I have boasted myself capable. Lady Leonora L——, my new friend, has, by all the English eloquence of virtue, obtained from me a promise, which, I fear, I shall not have the fortitude to keep—but I must make the attempt——Forbid R*** to write to me——Yes! I have written the words——Forbid R*** to write to me——Forbid him to think of me ——I will do more—if possible I will forbid myself henceforward to think of him—to think of love——Adieu, my Gabrielle——All the illusions of life are over, and a dreary blank of future existence lies before me, terminated only by the grave. To-morrow I go to L—— Castle, with feelings which I can compare only to those of the unfortunate la Villiere when she renounced her lover, and resolved to bury herself in a cloister.—Alas! why have not I the resource of devotion?

Your unhappy OLIVIA.

LETTER X. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

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PUBLISH my travels!—Not I, my dear friend. The world shall never have the pleasure of laughing at General B——'s trip to Paris. Before a man sets about to inform others, he should have seen, not only the surface, but the bottom of things; he should have had not only a *vue d'oiseau*, but, (to use a celebrated naval commander's expression) a *vue de poisson* of his subject. By this time you must have heard enough of the Louvre and the Thuilleries, and Versailles, and le petit Trianon, and St. Cloud—and you have had enough of pictures and statues; and you know all that can be known of Bonaparte, by seeing him at a review or a levee; and the fashionable beauties and *celebrated characters* of the hour have all passed and repassed through the magic lantern. A fresh showman might make his figures a little more correct, or a little more in laughable caricature, but he could produce nothing new. Alas! there is nothing new under the sun. Nothing remains for the moderns, but to practise the oldest follies the newest ways. Would you, for the sake of your female friends, know the fashionable dress of a Parisian *elegante*, see Seneca on the transparent vestments of the Roman ladies, who, like these modern belles, were generous in the display of their charms to the public. No doubt these French republicanists act upon the true Spartan principle of modesty: they take the most efficacious method to prevent their influence from being too great over the imaginations of

men, by renouncing all that insidious reserve, which alone can render even beauty permanently dangerous.

Of the cruelties of the revolution I can tell you nothing new. The public have been steeped up to the lips in blood, and have surely had their fill of horrors.

But, my dear friend, you say that I must be able to give a just view of the present state of French society, and of the best parts of it, because I have not, like some of my countrymen, hurried about Paris from one *spectacle* to another, seen the opera, and the playhouses, and the masked balls, and the gaming-houses, and the women of the Palais Royale, and the lions of all sorts; gone through the usual routine of presentation and public dinners, drunk French wine, damned French cookery, and "come home content." I have certainly endeavoured to employ my time better, and have had the good fortune to be admitted into the best *private societies* in Paris. These were composed of the remains of the French nobility, of men of letters and science, and of families, who, without interfering in politics, devote themselves to domestic duties, to literary and social pleasures. The happy hours I have passed in this society can never be forgotten and the kindness I have received has made its full impression upon an honest English heart. I will never disgrace the confidence of my friends, by drawing their characters for the public.

Cæsar, in all his glory, and all his despotism, could not, with impunity, force a Roman knight* to go upon the stage: but modern anecdote-mongers, more cruel and insolent than Cæsar, force their friends of all ages and sexes to appear, and speak, and act for the amusement or derision of the Public.

My dear friend, is not my resolution, never to favour the world with my tour, well grounded? I hope that I have proved to your satisfaction, that I could tell people nothing but what I do not understand, or what is not worth telling them, or what has been told a hundred times, or what, as a gentleman, I am bound not to publish.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XI. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

L—— Castle, June 26th, ——

Friendship, my amiable and interesting Gabrielle, is more an affair of the heart than of the head, more the instinct of taste than the choice of reason. With me the heart is no

* Laberius.

longer touched, when the imagination ceases to be charmed. Explain to me this metaphysical phenomenon of my nature, and, for your reward, I will quiet your jealousy, by confessing without compunction what now weighs on my conscience terribly. I begin to feel, that I can never love this English friend as I ought. She is *too English*—far too English for one who has known the charms of French ease, vivacity and sentiment; for one who has seen the bewitching Gabrielle's infinite variety.

Leonora has just the figure and face that you would picture to yourself for *une belle Angloise ;* and if our Milton comes into your memory, you might repeat—for the quotation is not too trite for a foreigner—

> "Grace is in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
> In every gesture dignity and love."

But then it is grace which says nothing, a heaven only for a husband, the dignity more of a matron than of a heroine, and love that might have suited Eve before she had seen this world. Leonora is certainly a beauty; but then a beauty, who does not know her power, and who, consequently, can make no one else feel its full extent. She is not unlike your beautiful Polish princess, but she has none of the charming Anastasia's irresistible transitions from soft, silent languor, to brilliant, eloquent enthusiasm. All the gestures and attitudes of Anastasia are those of taste and sentiment, Leonora's are simply those of nature. *La belle nature*, but not *le beau idéal.* With a figure that would grace any court, or shine upon any stage, she usually enters a room without producing, or thinking of producing, any sensation; she moves often without seeming to have any other intention than to change her place; and her fine eyes generally look as if they were made only to see with. At times she certainly has a most expressive and intelligent countenance. I have seen her face enlightened by the fire of genius, and shaded by the exquisite touches of sensibility; but all this is merely called forth by the occasion, and vanishes before it is noticed by half the company. Indeed, the full radiance of her beauty or of her wit seldom shines upon any one but her husband. The audience and spectators are forgotten. Heavens! what a difference between the effect which Leonora and Gabrielle produce! But to do her justice, much of this arises from the different *organization* of French and English society. In Paris, the insipid details of domestic life are judiciously kept behind the scenes, and women appear as heroines upon the stage, with all the advantages of decoration, to listen to the language of love, and to receive the homage of public admiration. In England, gallantry is not yet *systematized*, and our sex look more to

their families than to what is called *society* for the happiness of existence. And yet the affection of mothers for their children does not appear to be so strong in the hearts of English as of French women. In England ladies do not talk of the *sentiment of maternity* with that elegance and sensibility with which you expatiate upon it continually in conversation. They literally are *des bonnes mères de famille*, not from the impulse of sentiment, but merely from an early instilled sense of duty, for which they deserve little credit. However, they devote their lives to their children, and those who have the misfortune to be their intimate friends are doomed to see them half the day, or all day long, go through the part of the good mother in all its diurnal monotony of lessons and caresses. All this may be vastly right—it is a pity it is so tiresome. For my part I cannot conceive how persons of superior taste and talents can submit to it, unless it be to make themselves a reputation, and that you know is done by writing and talking on the general principles, not by submitting to the minute details of education. The great painter sketches the outline, and touches the principal features, but leaves the subordinate drudgery of filling up the parts, finishing the drapery, &c. to inferior hands.

Upon recollection, in my favourite "Sorrows of Werter," the heroine is represented cutting bread and butter for a group of children; I admire this simplicity in Goethe, 'tis one of the secrets by which he touches the heart. Simplicity is delightful by way of variety, but always simplicity is worse than *toujours perdrix*. Children in a novel or drama are charming little creatures: but in real life they are often insufferable plagues. What becomes of them in Paris I know not; but I am sure that they are never in the way of one's conversations or reveries; and it would be a blessing to society if English children were as inaudible and invisible. These things strike me sensibly upon my return to England, after so long an absence. Surely by means of the machinery of masters, and governesses, and schools, the manufacture of education might be carried on without incommoding those who desire to see only the finished production. Here I find the daughter of an English duke, but lately married, a woman in the first bloom of youth, of the highest pretensions in point of rank, beauty, fashion, accomplishments and talents, devoting herself to the education of two children, orphans, left to her care by an elder sister. To take charge of orphans is a good and fine action; as such it touches me sensibly; but then where is the necessity of sacrificing one's friends, and one's pleasures, day after day, and hour after hour, to mere children? Leonora can persevere only from a notion of du-

ty. Now in my opinion, when generosity becomes duty it ceases to be virtue. Virtue requires free will; duty implies constraint. Virtue acts from the impulse of the moment, and never tires or is tired; duty drudges on in consequence of reflection, and, weary herself, wearies all beholders. Duty, always laborious, never can be graceful; and what is not graceful in woman cannot be amiable. Can it, my amiable Gabrielle?—But I reproach myself for all I have written. Leonora is my friend—besides, I am really obliged to her, and for the universe would I not hint a thought to her disadvantage. Indeed she is a most excellent, a faultless character, and it is the misfortune of your Olivia not to love perfection as she ought.

My charming and interesting Gabrielle, I am more out of humour with myself than you can conceive: for in spite of all that reason and gratitude urge, I fear I cannot prefer the insipid virtues of Leonora to the lively graces of Gabrielle.

As to the cold husband, Mr. L——, I neither know nor wish to know any thing of him; but I live in hopes of an agreeable and interesting accession to our society to-day from the arrival of Leonora's intimate friend, a young widow, whose husband I understand was a man of a harsh temper: she has gone through severe trials with surprising fortitude; and though I do not know her history, I am persuaded it must be interesting. Assuredly this husband could never have been the man of her choice, and of course she must have had some secret unhappy attachment, which doubtless preyed upon her spirits. Probably the object of her affection, in despair at her marriage, plighted his faith unfortunately, or possibly may have fallen a sacrifice to his constancy. I am all impatience to see her. Her husband's name was so ruggedly English, that I am sure you would never be able to pronounce it, especially if you only saw it written, therefore I shall always to you call her Helen, a name which is more pleasing to the ear, and more promising to the imagination. I have not been able to prevail upon Leonora to describe her friend to me exactly; she say only, that she loves Helen too well to overpraise her beforehand. My busy fancy has however bodied forth her form, and painted her in the most amiable and enchanting colours. Hark;—she is just arrived. Adieu.

OLIVIA.

LETTER XII. FROM MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

July 2.

My dear Margaret, why is not your name Matilda, or Seraphina, or Adelina? How can any body of the name of Margaret be amiable or estimable, or a fit correspondent for a person of delicate sensibility? Stay; I am wrong, and you are fit to be written to, provided you style yourself Marguerite; for then you know you are a pearl, and a daisy, as well as a woman, and I may go back to Chaucer and the fourteenth century; or, farther still, to the Troubadours and the Provençals, and I may say the finest things imaginable about the *eye of day*, and the worship of the daisy, and the burthen of my song may be

"Si douce est la Marguerite."

Having now had the honour of spending nearly a week in the society of the celebrated enchantress, Lady Olivia, you will naturally expect that I should be much improved in the art of love: but before I come to my improvements, I must tell you, what will be rather more interesting, that Leonora is perfectly well and happy, and that I have the dear delight of exclaiming ten times an hour, "Ay, just as I thought it would be!—Just such a wife, just such a mother, just such a mistress of a family I knew she would make."

"*Not to admire*," is an art or a precept which I have not been able to practise much since I came here. Some philosophers tell us that admiration is not only a silly but a fatiguing state of mind; and I suppose that nothing could have preserved my mind from being tired to death, but the quantity of bodily exercise which I have taken. I could if I pleased give you a plan and elevation of this castle. Nay, I doubt not but I could stand an examination in the catalogue of the pictures, or the inventory of the furniture.

You Helen!—you who could not remember the colour of Lady N——'s *new* curtains after you had seen them at least a hundred times!

Lady N—— was indifferent to me, and how could I hang up her curtains in my memory? By what could they hold? Do you not know Margaret . . . . all the fine things that I could say, and that quartos have said before me, about the association of ideas and sensations, &c.? Those we love impart to uninteresting objects the power of pleasing, as the magnet can communicate to inert metal its attractive influence.

Till Mr. L*** was Leonora's lover I never liked him much. I do not mean to call him inert. I always knew that he had many excellent qualities, but there was nothing in his temper peculiarly agreeable to me, and there was something in

his character that I did not thoroughly understand; yet since he is become Leonora's husband I find my understanding much improved, and I dare say it will soon be so far enlarged, that I shall comprehend him perfectly.

Leonora has almost persuaded me to like Lady Olivia. Not to laugh at her would be impossible. I wish you could see the way in which we go on together. Our first setting out would have diverted you. Enter Lady Olivia breathless, with an air of theatric expectation—advances to embrace Helen, who is laughing with Leonora—her back turned towards the side of the stage at which Olivia enters—Olivia pauses suddenly, and measures Helen *with a long look.* What passes in Lady Olivia's mind at this moment I do not know, but I guess that she was disappointed wofully by my appearance. After some time she was recovered, by Leonora's assistance, from her reverie, and presently began to admire my vivacity, and to find out that I was Clarissa's Miss Howe—no, I was Lady G.—no, I was Heloise's Clara: but I, choosing to be myself, and insisting upon being an *original*, sunk again visibly and rapidly in Olivia's opinion, till I was in imminent danger of being *nobody.* Leonora again kindly interposed to save me from annihilation; and after an interval of an hour or two dedicated to letter-writing, Lady Olivia returned and seated herself beside me, resolved to decide what manner of woman I was. Certain novels are the touchstones of feeling and *intellect* with certain ladies. Unluckily I was not well read in these; and in the questions put to me from these sentimental statute-books, I gave strange judgments, often for the husband or parents againt the heroine. I did not even admit the plea of destiny, irresistible passion or *entraînement*, as in all cases sufficient excuse for all errors and crimes. Moreover, I excited astonishment by calling things by obsolete names. I called a married woman's having a lover *a crime!* Then I was no judge of virtues, for I thought a wife's making an intimate friend of her husband's mistress was scandalous and mean; but this I was told is the height of delicacy and generosity. I could not perceive the propriety of a man's liking two women at the same time, or a woman's having a platonic attachment for half a dozen lovers; and I owned that I did not wish divorce could be as easily obtained in England as in France. All which proved that I have never been out of England—a great misfortune! I dare say it will soon be discovered that women as well as madeira cannot be good for any thing till they have crossed the line. But beside the obloquy of having lived only in the best company in England, I was further disgraced by the discovery, that I am deplorably ignorant of metaphysics, and have never been enlightened by any philanthropic transcendental for-

eign professor of humanity. Profoundly humiliated, and not having yet taken the first step towards knowledge,the knowing that I was ignorant, I was pondering upon my sad fate, when Lady Olivia, putting her hand upon my shoulder, summoned me into the court of Love, there in my own proper person to answer such questions as it should please her ladyship to ask. For instance :—

"Were you ever in love?—How often ?—When ?—Where ?—And with whom ?"

Never having stood a cross examination in public upon these points, I was not quite prepared to reply; and I was accused of giving evasive answers, and convicted of blushing. Mr. L——, who was present at this examination, enjoyed, in his grave way, my astonishment and confusion, but said not one word. I rallied my spirits and my wits, and gave some answers which gained the smile of the court on my side.

From these specimens you may guess, my dear Margaret, how well this lady and I are likely to agree. I shall divert myself with her absurdities without scruple. Yet notwithstanding the flagrancy of these, Leonora persuades me to think well of Olivia ; indeed I am so happy here, that it would be a difficult matter at present to make me think ill of any body. The good qualities which Leonora sees in her are not yet visible to my eyes ; but Leonora's visual orb is so cleared with charity and love, that she can discern what is not revealed to vulgar sight. Even in the very germe she discovers the minute form of the perfect flower. *The Olivia* will, I hope, in time blow out in full perfection.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XIII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

July 4th.

OH my Gabrielle! this Helen is not precisely the person that I expected. Instead of being a dejected beauty, she is all life and gaiety,

"With spirits light, to every joy in tune."

I own I should like her better if she were a little more pensive; a tinge of melancholy would, in her situation, be so becoming and natural. My imagination was quite disappointed when I beheld the quickness of her eyes and frequency of her smiles. Even her mode of showing affection to Leonora was not such as could please me. This is the first visit, I understand, that she has paid Leonora since her marriage: these friends have been separated for many months.—I was not

present at their meeting: but I came into the room a few minutes after *Helen's* arrival, and I should have thought that they had seen one another but yesterday. This *dear Helen* was quite at ease and at home in a few moments, and seemed as if she had been living with us for years. I make allowance for the ease of well-bred people. Helen has lived much in the world, and has polished manners. But the heart! the heart! is superior to politeness; and even ease, in some situations, shows a want of the delicate *tact* of sentiment. In a similar situation I should have been silent, entranced, absorbed, in my sensations—overcome by them perhaps—dissolved in tears. But in Helen there appeared no symptoms of real sensibility—nothing characteristic—nothing profound—nothing concentrated: it was all superficial, and evaporated in the common way. I was provoked to see Leonora satisfied. She assures me that Helen has uncommonly strong affections, and that her character rather exceeds than is deficient in enthusiasm. Possibly; but I am certain that Helen is in no danger of becoming romantic. Far from being abstracted, I never saw any one seem more interested and eager about every present occurrence—pleased, even to childishness, with every passing trifle. I confess that she is too much of this world for me. But I will if possible suspend my judgment, and study her a few hours longer before I give you my definitive opinion.

July 9th.

Well, my Gabrielle, my *definitive opinion* is, that I can never love this friend of Leonora. I said that she had lived much in the world—but only in the English world: she has never seen any other; therefore, though quite in a different style from Leonora, she shocks me with the same nationality. All her ideas are exclusively English: she has what is called English good sense, and English humour, and English prejudices of *all sorts*, both masculine and feminine. She takes fire in defence of her country and of her sex; nay, sometimes blushes even to awkwardness, which one would not expect in the midst of her good breeding and vivacity. What a difference between her vivacity and that of my charming Gabrielle! as great as between the enlargement of your mind and the limited nature of her understanding. I tried her on various subjects, but found her entrenched in her own contracted notions. All new, or liberal, or sublime ideas in morality or metaphysics she either cannot seize, or seizes only to place in a ridiculous point of view. A certain sign of mediocrity. Adieu, my Gabrielle. I must send you the pictures, whether engaging or forbidding, of those with whom your Olivia is

destined to pass her time. When I have no events to relate, still I must write to convey to you my sentiments. Alas! how imperfectly!—for I have interdicted myself the expression of those most interesting to my heart. Leonora, calmly prudent, coolly virtuous, knows not what it costs me to be faithful to this cruel promise. Write to me, my sympathizing, my tender friend!

Your ever unhappy OLIVIA.

LETTER XIV. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

July 10th.

SOME very good people, like some very fine pictures, are best at a distance. But Leonora is not one of these: the nearer you approach the better you like her. As in Arabesque-work you may admire the beauty of the design even at a distance, but you cannot appreciate the delicacy of the execution till you examine it closely, and discover that every line is formed of grains of gold almost imperceptibly fine. I am glad that the "small sweet courtesies of life" have been hailed by one sentimental writer at least. The minor virtues are not to be despised even in comparison with the most exalted. The common rose, I have often thought, need not be ashamed of itself even in company with the finest exotics in a hot house; and I remember that your brother, in one of his letters, observed, that the common cock makes a very respectable figure even in the grand Parisian assembly of all the stuffed birds and beasts, in the universe. It is a glorious thing to have a friend who will jump into a river, or down a precipice, to save one's life: but as I do not intend to tumble down precipices, or to throw myself into the water above half a dozen times, I would rather have for my friends persons who would not reserve their kindness wholly for these grand occasions, but who could condescend to make me happy every day, and all day long, even by actions not sufficiently sublime to be recorded in history or romance.

Do not infer from this that I think Leonora would hesitate to make *great* sacrifices. I have had sufficient experience of her fortitude and active courage of mind in the most trying circumstances, whilst many who talked more stoutly shrunk from *committing* themselves by actions.

Some maxim-maker says, that past misfortunes are good for nothing but to be forgotten. I am not of his opinion: I think that they are good to make us know our winter from our summer friends, and to make us feel for those who have

sustained us in adversity, that most pleasurable sensation of the human mind, gratitude.

But I am straying unawares into the province of sentiment, where I am such a stranger that I shall inevitably lose my way, especially as I am too proud to take a guide. Lady Olivia **** may perhaps be very fond of Leonora: and as she has every possible cause to be so, it is but reasonable and charitable to suppose that she is: but I should never guess it by her manner. She speaks of her friendship sometimes in the most romantic style, but often makes observations upon *the enviable coolness and imperturbability of Leonora's disposition*, which convinces me that she does not understand it in the least. Those who do not really feel, always pitch their expressions too high or too low, as deaf people bellow, or speak in a whisper. But I may be mistaken in my suspicions of Olivia, for *to do the lady justice*, as Mrs. Candour would say, she is so affected that it is difficult to know what she really feels. Those who put on rouge occasionally are suspected of wearing it constantly, and never have any credit for their natural colour; presently they become so accustomed to common rouge, that mistaking scarlet for pale pink, they persist in laying on more and more, till they are like nothing human.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XV. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

July 12th.

I HAVE found it! I have found it! dear Gabrielle, rejoice with me! I have solved the metaphysical problem, which perplexed me so cruelly, and now I am once more at peace with my myself. I have discovered the reason why I cannot love Leonora, as she merits to be loved: she has obliged me: and the nature of obligation is such, that it supposes superiority on one side, and consequently destroys the equality, the freedom, the ease, the charm of friendship. Gratitude weighs upon one's heart in proportion to the delicacy of its feelings. To minds of an ordinary sort it may be pleasurable; for with them it is sufficiently feeble to be calm; but in souls of a superior cast, it is a poignant, painful sensation, because it is too strong ever to be tranquil. In short,

"'Tis bliss but to a certain bound—
Beyond, 'tis agony."

For my own part, the very dread that I shall not be thought to express enough, deprives me of the power to speak or even to feel. Fear, you know, extinguishes affection; and of all fears the dread of not being sufficiently grateful operates the most powerfully. Thus sensibility destroys itself.—Gracious *Heaven!* teach me to moderate mine.

In the nature of the obligation with which Leonora has oppressed my heart, there is something peculiarly humiliating. Upon my return to this country I found the malignant genius of Scandal bent upon destroying my reputation. *Reputation!* I cannot convey to you, Gabrielle, the importance which women in England attach to that word, nor the emphasis with which it is pronounced. You have no idea of the miserable force of prejudice which still prevails here. There are some women who emancipate themselves, but then unluckily they are not in sufficient number to keep each other in countenance in public. *One* would not choose to be confined to the society of people who cannot go to Court, though sometimes they take the lead elsewhere. We are full half a century behind you in civilization; and your revolution has, I find, afforded all our stiffened moralists *incontrovertible* arguments against liberty of opinion or conduct in either sex.

I was thunderstruck when I saw the grave and repulsive faces of all my female acquaintance. At first I attributed every thing that was strange and disagreeable to English reserve, of which I had retained a sufficiently formidable idea: but I presently found that there was some other cause which kept all these nice consciences at a distance from my atmosphere.

Would you believe it, I saw myself upon the point of being quite excluded from good society. Leonora saved me from this imminent danger. Voluntarily, and I must say nobly, if not gracefully, Leonora came forward in my defence. Vanquishing her natural English timidity, she braved the eyes, and tongues, and advice of all the prudes and old dowagers my enemies, amongst whom I may count the superannuated Duchess her mother, the proudest dowager now living. When I appeared in public with a personage of Leonora's unblemished reputation, scandal, much against her will, was forced to be silent, and it was to be taken for granted that I was, in the language of prudery, perfectly innocent. Leonora, to be consistent in goodness, or to complete her triumph in the face of the world, invited me to accompany her to the country.——I have now been some weeks at this superb castle. Heaven is my witness that I came with a heart overflowing with affection; but the painful, the agonizing sense of humiliation mixed with my tenderest sentiments, and all became bitterness insufferable. O Gabrielle! you, and perhaps you alone upon earth, can understand my feelings. Adieu!—pity me—I must not ask you a single question about—I must not write the name for ever dear—What am I saying? where are my promises?—Adieu—Adieu.

Your unhappy OLIVIA.

LETTER XVI. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

July 16th.

As I have never thought it my duty in this mortal life to mourn for the absurdities of my fellow-creatures, I should now enjoy the pleasure of laughing at Lady Olivia, if my propensity were not checked by a serious apprehension that she will injure Leonora's happiness. From the most generous motives dear Leonora is continually anxious to soothe her mind, to persuade and reason her into common sense, to re-establish her in public opinion, and to make her happy. But I am convinced that Lady Olivia never will have common sense, and consequently never can be happy. Twenty times a day I wish her at the antipodes, for I dread lest Leonora should be implicated in her affairs, and involved in her misery.

Last night this foolish woman, who unluckily is graced with all the power of words, poured forth a fine declamation in favour of divorce. In vain Leonora reasoned, expostulated, blushed. Lady Olivia cannot blush for herself; and though both Mr. L*** and I were present, she persisted with that vehemence which betrays personal interest in an argument. I suspect that she is going to try to obtain a divorce from her husband, that she may marry her lover. Consider the consequences of this for Leonora.—Leonora to be the friend of a woman who will brave the infamy of a trial at Doctors Commons! But Leonora says I am mistaken, and that all this is only Olivia's way of talking. I wish then, that if she does not intend to act like a fool, she would not talk like one. I agree with the gentleman who said that a woman, who begins by playing the fool, always ends by playing the devil. Even before me, though I certainly never solicit her confidence, Lady Olivia talks with the most imprudent openness of her love affairs; not I think from ingenuousness, but from inability to restrain herself. Begin what subject of conversation I will, as far from Cupid as possible, she will bring me back again to him before I know where I am. She has no ideas but on this one subject. Leonora, dear kind-hearted Leonora, attributes this to the temporary influence of a violent passion, which she assures me Olivia will conquer, and that then all her great and good qualities will, as if freed from enchantment, re-assume their natural vigour. *Natural!*—there is nothing natural about this sophisticated lady. I wish Leonora would think more of herself and less of other people. As to Lady Olivia's excessive sensibility, I have no faith in it. I do not think either the lover or the passion so much to be feared for her, as the want of a lover and the habit of thinking that it is necessary to be in love. **********

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XVII. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

Paris, June 18th, Hotel de Courlande.

MY DEAR L——,

WHEN you ask a countryman in England the way to the next town, he replies, "Where do you come from, master?" and till you have answered this question, no information can you obtain from him. You ask me what I know of Lady Olivia ——. What is your reason for asking? Till you have answered this question, hope for no information from me. Seriously, Lady Olivia had left Paris before I arrived, therefore you cannot have my judgment of her Ladyship, which I presume is all you could depend upon. If you will take hearsay evidence, and if you wish me to speak to general character, I can readily satisfy you. Common repute is loud and unanimous in favour of her talents, beauty and fashion: there is no resisting, I am told, the fascination of her manners and conversation; *but* her opinions are fashionably liberal, and her practice as liberal as her theories. Since her separation from her husband, her lover is publicly named. Some English friends plead in her favour platonic attachment: this, like benefit of clergy, is claimed of course for a first offence: but Lady Olivia's Parisian acquaintance are not so scrupulous or so old fashioned as to think it an offence; they call it an *arrangement*, and to this there can be no objection. As a French gentleman said to me the other day, with an unanswerable shrug, "Tout le monde sait que R*** est son amant; d'ailleurs, c'est la femme la plus aimable du monde."

As to Lady Olivia's friend, Madame de P——, she sees a great deal of company: her house is the resort of people of various descriptions; ministers, foreigners, coquettes and generals; in short, of all those who wish without scandal or suspicion to intrigue either in love or politics. Her assemblies are also frequented by a few of *l'ancien régime*, who wish to be in favour with the present government. Madame de P——, of a noble family herself, and formerly much at court, has managed matters so as to have regained all her husband's confiscated property, and to have acquired much influence with some of the leading men of the day. In her manners and conversation there is an odd mixture of frivolity and address, of the airs of coquetry and the jargon of sentiment. She has the politeness of a French countess, with *exquisite* knowledge of the world, and of *les convenances*, joined to that freedom of opinion which marks the present times. In the midst of all these inconsistencies, it is difficult to guess what her real character may be. At first sight, I should pronounce her to be a silly woman, governed by vanity and the whim of the moment: but those who know her better than I do, be-

lieve her to be a woman of considerable talents, inordinately fond of power, and uniformly intent upon her own interest, using coquetry only as a means to govern our sex, and frivolity as a mask for her ambition. In short, Madame de P—— is a perfect specimen of the combination of an *intrigante* and an *élégante:* a combination often found in Paris. Here women mingle politics and gallantry—men mix politics and epicurism—which is the better mixture?

I have business of importance to my country to transact today, *therefore* I am going to dine with the modern Apicius. Excuse me, my dear friend, if I cannot stay at present to answer your questions about divorce. I must be punctual. What sort of a negociator can he make who is too late at a minister's dinner? Five minutes might change the face of Europe.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XVIII. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Paris.

My incomparable Olivia! your letters are absolutely divine. I am *maussade*, I *vegetate*. I cannot be said to live the days when I do not hear from you. Last Thursday I was disappointed of one of these dear letters, and *Brave-et-tendre* told me frankly that I was so little amiable he should not have known me.—As to the rest, pardon me for not writing punctually: I have been really in a chaos of business and pleasure, and I do not know which fatigues most. But I am obliged to attend the ministers every day, for the sake of my friends.

A thousand and a thousand thanks for your pictures of your English friends: sketches by a masterly hand must be valuable, whatever the subject. I would rather have the pictures than the realities. Your Helen and your Lady Leonora are too good for me, and I pity you from my soul for being shut up in that old castle. I suppose it is like an old castle in Dauphiny, where I once spent a week, and where I was nearly frightened to death by the flapping of the old tapestry behind my bed, and by the bats which flew in through the broken windows. They say, however that our *châteaux* and yours are something different. Of this I have no clear conception.

I send you three comforters in your prison. A billet-doux —a new novel—and a pattern of my sandal; a billet-doux from R*** says every thing for itself; but I must say something for the new novel. Zenobie, which I now send you, is

the declared rival of Seraphine. Parties have run high on both sides, and applications were made and inuendoes discovered, and wit and sentiment came to close combat; and, as usual, people talked till they did not understand themselves. For a fortnight, wherever one went the first words to be heard on entering every *salon* were Seraphine and Zenobie.—Peace or war.—Mademoiselle Georges and Mademoiselle Duchesnois were nothing to Seraphine and Zenobie. For Heaven's sake tell me which you prefer! But I fear they will be no more talked of before I have your answer. To say the truth, I am tired of both heroines, for a fortnight is too long to talk or think of any one thing.

I flatter myself you will like my sandals: they are my own invention, and my foot really shows them to advantage. You know I might say, as du P*** said of himself, "J'ai un pied dont la petitesse échappe à la vitesse de la pensée."—I thought my poor friend Madame Dumarais would have died with envy, the other day, when I appeared in them at her ball; which by the bye was in all its decorations as absurd, and in as bad taste as usual. For the most part these *nouveaux riches* lavish money, but can never purchase taste or a sense of propriety. All is gold: but that is not enough; or rather that is too much.—In spite of all that both the Indies, China, Arabia, Egypt, and even Paris can do for them, they will be ever out of place, in the midst of their magnificence: they will never even know how to ruin themselves nobly. They must live and die as they were born, ridiculous. Now I would rather not exist than feel myself ridiculous. But I believe no one living, not even le petit d'Heronville, knows himself to be an object of ridicule. There are no looking-glasses for the mind, and I question whether we should use them if there were. D'Heronville is just as you left him, and as much my amusement as he used to be yours. He goes on with an eternal galimatias of patriotism, with such a self-sufficient air and decided tone! never suspecting that he says only what other people make him say, and that he is listened to, only to find out what *some people* think. Many will say before fools what they would not hazard before wise men; not considering that fools can repeat as well as parrots. I once heard a great man remark, that the only spies fit to be trusted are those who do not know themselves to be such, who have no salary but what their vanity pays them, and who are employed without being accredited.

But trève de politique!—My charming Olivia, I know, abhors politics as much as I detest metaphysics—from all lips or pens but hers. Now I must tell you something of your friends here.

O—— talks nonsense as agreeably as ever, and dances as divinely. 'Tis a pity he cannot always dance, for then he would not ruin himself at play. He wants me to get him a regiment—As if I had any power!—or as if I would use it for this purpose, when I know that my interesting friend Madame Q—— would break her poor little heart if he were to quit her.

Mon Cœur is as pretty as ever; but she is now in affliction. She has lost her dear little dog Corisonde. He died suddenly; almost in her arms! She will erect a monument to him in her charming *jardin Anglois*. This will occupy her—and then "Time the comforter"—Inimitable Voltaire.

Our dear *Brillante* has just had a superb *hommage* from her lover the commissary—a necklace and bracelets of the finest pearls: but she cannot wear them yet: her brother having died last week, she is in deep mourning. This brother was not upon good terms with her. He never forgave the divorce. He thought it a disgrace to have a sister *une divorcée*; but he was full of prejudice, poor man, and he is dead, and we need think no more of him or of his faults.

Our ci-devant chanoine, who married that little Mendon, is as miserable as possible, and as ridiculous: for he is jealous of his young wife, and she is a *franche-coquette*. The poor man looks as if he repented sincerely of his errors. What a penitent a coquette can make of a husband! Bourdaloue and Massillon would have tried their powers on this man's heart in vain.

Did I tell you that Madame G—— is a second time divorced? But this time it is her husband's doing, not hers. This handsome husband has spent all the immense fortune she brought him, and now procures a divorce for *incompatibility of temper*, and is going to marry another lady, richer than Madame G——, and as great a fool. This system of divorce, though convenient, is not always advantageous to women. However, in one point of view, I wonder that the rigid moralists do not defend it, as the only means of making a man in love with his own wife. A man divorces; the law does not permit him to marry the same woman afterwards; of course this prohibition makes him fall in love with her. Of this we have many edifying examples besides Fanchette, who, though she was so beautiful, and a tolerable actress, would never have drawn all Paris to the Vaudeville if she had not been a *divorcée*, and if it had not been known that her husband, who played the lover of the piece, was dying to marry her again. Apropos, Madame St. Germain is acting one of her own romances, in the high sublime style, and threatens to poison herself for love of her perjured inconstant—but it will not do.

Madame *la Grande* was near having a sad accident the other night: in crossing the Pont-neuf her horses took fright; for there was a crowd and *embarras*, a man having just drowned himself—not for love, but for hunger. How many men, women and children, do you think drowned themselves in the Seine last year? Upwards of two hundred. This is really shocking, and a stop should be put to it by authority. It absolutely makes me shudder and reflect. Mais, *après nous le déluge* was la Pompadour's maxim, and should be ours.

Madame Folard *se coiffe en cheveux*, and Madame Rocroix crowns herself with roses, whilst all the world knows that either of them is old enough to be my mother. In former days a woman could not wear flowers after thirty, and was *bel esprit* or *dévote* at forty, for it was thought bad taste to do otherwise. But now every body may be as young as they please, or as ridiculous. Women have certainly gained by the new order of things.

Our poor friend *Vermeille* se meurt de la poitrine—a victim to tea and late hours. She is an interesting creature, and my heart bleeds for her: she will never last till winter.

Do you know, it is said, we shall soon have no wood to burn. What can have become of all our forests? People should inquire after them. The Venus de Medicis has at last found her way down the Seine. It is not determined yet where to place her: but she is at Paris, and that is a great point gained for her. You complained that the Apollo stands with his back so near the wall, that there is no seeing half the beauties of his shoulders. If I have any influence, Venus shall not be so served. I have been to see her. She is certainly divine—but not French. I do not despair of seeing her surpassed by our artists.

Adieu, my adorable Olivia. I should have finished my letter yesterday; but when I came home in the morning, expecting to have a moment sacred to you and friendship, who should I find established in an arm chair in my cabinet, but our old Countess *Ci-devant*. There was no retreat for me. In the midst of my concentrated rage I was obliged to advance and embrace her, and there was an end of happiness for the day. The pitiless woman kept me till it was even too late to dress, talking over her family misfortunes; as if they were any thing to me. She wants to get her son employed, but her pride will not let her pay her court properly, and she wants me to do it for her. Not I, truly. I should shut my doors against her, but for the sake of her nephew *le roué*, who is really a pretty young man. My angel, I embrace you tenderly.

GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER XIX. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

July 25th.

How melancholy to a feeling heart is the moment when illusion vanishes, whether that illusion has been created by the magic of love or of friendship! How many such moments, Gabrielle, has your unfortunate friend been doomed to endure! Alas! when will treacherous fancy cease to throw a deceitful brilliancy upon each new object!

Perhaps I am too delicate—but R***'s note, enclosed in your last, my Gabrielle, was unlike his former letters. It was not passionate, it was only reasonable. A man who can reason is no longer in love. The manner in which he speaks of divorce shocked me beyond expression. Is it for him to talk of scruples, when upon this subject I have none? I own to you that my pride and my tenderness are sensibly wounded. 'Tis for him to convince me that I am in the wrong. I shall not be at ease till I hear from you again, my amiable friend: for my residence here becomes insupportable. But a few short weeks are past since I fancied Leonora an angel, and now she falls below the ordinary standard of mortals. But a few short weeks are past since, in the full confidence of finding in Leonora a second self, a second Gabrielle, I eagerly developed to her my inmost soul, yet now my heart closes, I fear never more to open. The sad conviction, that we have but few ideas, and no feelings in common, stops my tongue when I attempt to speak, chills my heart when I begin to listen.

Do you know, my Gabrielle, I have discovered that Leonora is inordinately selfish? For all other faults I have charity; but selfishness, which has none to give, must expect none. O divine Sensibility, defend me from this isolation of the heart! All thy nameless sorrows, all thy heart-rending tortures, would I a thousand times rather endure. Leonora's selfishness breaks out perpetually; and, alas! it is of the most inveterate, incurable kind: every thing that is immediately or remotely connected with self, she loves, and loves with the most provoking pertinacity. Her mother, her husband, her child, she adores because they are her own; and even her sister's children, because she considers them, she says, as her own. All and every possible portion of self she cherishes with the most sordid partiality. All that touches these relations touches her; and every thing which is theirs, or in other words, which is hers, she deems excellent and sacred. Last night I just hazarded a word of ridicule upon some of the obsolete prejudices of that august personage, that duchess of old tapestry, her still living ancestor. I wish, Gabrielle, you had seen Leonora's countenance. Her colour rose up to her temples, her eyes lightened with indignation, and her whole

person assumed a dignity, which might have killed a presumptuous lover, or, better far, might have enslaved him for life. What folly to waste all this upon such an occasion. But selfishness is ever blind to its real interests. Leonora is so bigoted to this old woman, that she is already in mind an old woman herself. She fancies that she traces a resemblance to her mother, and of course to dear self, in her infant, and she looks upon it with such doating eyes, and talks to it with such exquisite tones of fondness, as are to me, who know the source from which they proceed, quite ridiculous and disgusting. An infant, who has no imaginable merit, and, to impartial eyes, no charms, she can love to this excess from no motive but pure *egotism*. Then her husband—but this subject I must reserve for another letter. I am summoned to walk with him this moment.

Adieu, charming Gabrielle. OLIVIA.

LETTER XX. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

MY DEAR L——, Paris, 180—.

ENCLOSED I send you, according to your earnest desire, Cambaceres' reflections upon the intended new law of divorce. Give me leave to ask why you are so violently interested upon this occasion? Do you envy France the blessings of divorce? Do you wish that English husbands and wives should have the power of divorcing each other at pleasure for *incompatibility of temper?* And have you calculated the admirable effect this would produce upon the temper both of the weaker and the stronger sex? To bear and forbear would then be no longer necessary. Every happy pair might quarrel and part at a moment's notice—at a year's notice at most. And their children? The wisdom of Solomon would be necessary to settle the just division of the children. I have this morning been attending a court of law to hear a famous trial between two husbands: the abdicated lord a ci-devant noble, and the reigning husband a ci-devant grand-vicaire, who has *reformed*. Each party claimed a right to the children by the first marriage, for the children were minors entitled to large fortunes. The *reformed* grand-vicaire pleaded his own cause with astonishing assurance, amidst the discountenancing looks, murmurs, and almost amidst the groans of disapprobation from the majority of the auditors. His powers of impudence, however, failed him at last. I sat on the bench behind him, and saw that his ears had the grace to blush. After another hearing, this cause, which had lasted four years was decided: and the

first husband and real father was permitted to have the guardianship of his own children. During the four years' litigation, the friends of the parties, from the grandmother downwards were all at irreconcileable variance. What became of the children all this time! Their mother was represented during the trial as she deserved to be, as a wretch void of shame and gratitude. The father was universally pitied, though his rival painted him as a coward, who during the revolution had left his children to save himself by flight: and as a fool, who had left his wife to the care of a profligate grand-vicaire. Divorce is not countenanced by opinion in Paris, though permitted by law. With a few exceptions in extraordinary cases, I have observed that *les divorcées* are not received in good society.

To satiate your curiosity, I send you all the papers that have been written lately on divorce, of which you will find that of Cambaceres the best. The wits say that he is an impartial judge. I presume you want these pamphlets for some foolish friend; for yourself you can never want them, blessed as you are with such a wife as Lady Leonora L——. I am not surprised that profligate men should wish for freedom of divorce, because it would save them damages in Doctors Commons: but you rather astonish me—if a wise man should be astonished at any thing in these days—by assuring me that you have lately heard this system eloquently defended by a female philosopher. What can women expect from it but contempt? Next to polygamy, it would prove the most certain method of destroying the domestic happiness of the sex, as well as their influence and respectability in society. But some of the dear creatures love to talk of what they do not understand, and usually show their eloquence to the greatest advantage, by taking the wrong side of a question.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XXI. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

L. Castle, July 30th.

From selfishness to jealousy there is but one step, or rather there is none; for jealousy of a certain sort is but selfishness in another form. How different this passion as I have felt it, and as I see it shown! In some characters it is the symptom of amiable and exquisite sensibility; in others, of odious coldness and contraction of heart. In some of our sex it is, you know, my Gabrielle, a delicate fear, a tender anxiety, a proof of ardent passion; in others, it is a mere love of power, a disgusting struggle for the property of a

heart, an absurd assertion of rights and prerogatives. Surely no prejudice of education or institution can be more barbarous, than that which teaches a wife, that she has an indefeasible and exclusive right, both to the affections and the fidelity of her husband. I am astonished to hear it avowed by any woman who has the slightest pretensions to delicacy of sentiment, or liberality of mind. I should expect to find this vulgar prejudice only among the downright dames, who talk of *my good man*, and lay a particular emphasis on the possessive pronoun *my* ; who understand literally, and expect that their spouses should adhere punctually, to every coarse article of our strange marriage vow.

In certain points of view, my Gabrielle, jealousy is undoubtedly the strongest proof of an indelicate mind. Yet, if I mistake not, the delicate, the divine Leonora, is liable to this terrestrial passion. Yesterday evening, as I was returning from a *stroll* in the park with Mr. L——, we met Leonora ; and me-thought she looked embarrassed at meeting us. Heaven knows there was not the slightest occasion for embarrassment, and I could not avoid being surprised at such weakness, I had almost said folly, in a woman of Leonora's sense, especially as she knows how my heart is attached. In the first moments of our intimacy my confidence was unbounded, as it ever is in those I love. Aware as I was of the light in which the prejudices of her education and her country make her view such connexions, yet I scrupled not with the utmost candour to confess the unfortunate attachment which had ruled my destiny. After this confidence, do not suspicion and jealousy on her part appear strange ? Were Mr. L—— and I shut up for life in the same prison, were we left together upon a desert island, were we alone in the universe, I could never think of him. And Leonora does not see this! How the passions obscure and degrade the finest understandings ! But perhaps I do her injustice, and that she felt nothing of what her countenance expressed. It is certain, however, that she was silent for some moments after she joined us, from what cause she knows best—so was Mr. L——, I suppose from English awkwardness—so was I, from pure astonishment. At length in pity of Leonora I broke the silence. I had recourse to the beauties of nature.

" What a heavenly evening!" said I. " We have been listening to the song of the birds, enjoying this fresh breeze of nature's perfumes." Leonora said something about the superiority of nature's perfumes to those of art ; and observed, " how much more agreeable the smell of flowers appears in the open air, than in confined rooms." Whilst she spoke she looked at her husband, as she continually does, for assent and approbation. He assented, but apparently without knowing

what he was saying; and only by one of his English monosyllables. I alone was at ease.

"Can any thing be more beautiful," continued I, looking back, "than the soft mellow foliage of those woods, and the exquisite tints of their rich colouring? What delicious melancholy such an evening spreads over the heart!—What reflections!—What recollections!—O! Leonora, look at the lights upon that mountain, and the deep shadows upon the lake below. Just such scenes have I admired, by such have I been entranced in Switzerland."

Leonora put her arm within mine—she seemed to have no objection to my thoughts going back to Switzerland—I sighed—she pressed my hand affectionately—I wiped the starting tear from my eye. Mr. L—— looked at me with something like surprise—whilst I repeated involuntarily,

> "I mourn, but ye woodlands, I mourn not for you,
> For morn is approaching your charms to restore,
> Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew."

I paused, recollecting myself, struck with *the ridicule* of repeating verses, and of indulging feelings in which no one perhaps sympathized.

"Those are beautiful lines," said Leonora. "That poem has always been a favourite of mine."

"And of mine also," said Mr. L——.

"I prefer Beattie's Hermit to all other hermits," said Leonora.

I was not in a mood calmly to discuss with her a point of criticism—I walked on in reverie: but in this I was not allowed to indulge. Mr. L—— asked if I could not recollect some more of the Hermit—I pleaded the worst memory in the world—a memory that can never recollect any poem perfectly by rote—only the touches of genius or sensibility, that strike me—and those are so few!

"But in this poem there are so many," said Leonora. I am sure she insisted only to please her husband, and pleaded against her real feelings purposely to conceal them. He persisted in his request with more warmth than usual. I was compelled to rouse myself from my reverie, and to call back my distant thoughts. I repeated all that I could recollect of the poem. Mr. L—— paid me a profusion of compliments upon the sweetness of my voice, and my taste in repeating poetry. He was pleased to find that my manner and tones gave an Italian expression to English Poetry, which to him was a peculiar charm. It reminded him of some Signora, whom he had known at Florence. This was the first time I had learned that he had been abroad. I was going to explore the foreign field of conversation, which he thus opened;

but just at that moment Leonora withdrew her arm from mine, and I fancied that she coloured. This might be only my fancy, or the natural effect of her stooping to gather a flower. We were now within sight of the castle. I pointed to one of the turrets over a Gothic window, upon which the gleams of the setting sun produced a picturesquely romantic effect—my glove happened to be off—and Leonora unluckily saw that her husband's eyes were fixed upon my arm instead of the turret to which I was pointing. 'Twas a trifle which I never should have noticed, had she not forced it upon my attention. She actually turned pale. I had the presence of mind not to put on my glove.

I must observe more accurately; I must decide whether this angelic Leonora is or is not susceptible of the mortal passion ycleped jealousy. I confess my curiosity is awakened.

Adieu, my ever amiable Gabrielle. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXII. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

August 3d.

NATURAL historians inform us, that a bee can see but an inch before his nose. Now because I am as busy as a bee, Lady Olivia takes it for granted that I am as short-sighted: but I can assure her Ladyship that my sphere of vision is not quite so contracted. I can see perhaps further than she wishes, even to the ultimate object of all her manœuvres: and farther still, I can see, Lady Olivia, what you cannot see, that you will be completely duped, and make yourself thoroughly ridiculous. To all which I have not the slightest objection; for by your operations Leonora's eyes will be opened at last, and she will see that I was right in neither loving nor pitying you for *your exquisite and unfortunate sensibility*.

My dear Margaret, affairs begin to wear a new aspect, still however under the planet Venus.

> "And if weak women go astray,
> Their stars are more in fault than they."

We must come round to a belief in judicial astrology again, because there is no other way by which a heroine can preserve consistency, and this system will always answer their purpose; for our stars may as well bear the blame of a hundred irresistible passions as of one. A mixture of judicial astrology and metaphysics, properly applied, is sovereign for a tender conscience. But I have not yet told you the fact which led to this digression.

Here is Olivia in the midst of her *belle passion* for an absent lover consoling herself by coquetting with all her might to

captivate another swain; and who do you think he is? The husband of that dearest friend, for whom, a short month ago, she would (witness present) have sacrificed a billion of lives. But this is all right and according to rule. There must be the strongest possible motives against an attachment to make it interesting by the violence of the struggles.

Fool that I am, why do I talk of struggles or attachment in explaining the conduct of a woman who has no heart! So kind as Leonora has been to her! So fondly attached as Leonora is to her husband! Olivia deserves . . . . . But I will not waste indignation; contempt will do better, and I am cool enough to feel it, and to anticipate with pleasure the *dénouement* of this pretty romance. Mr. L—— hates coquetry, loves Leonora, and does not dislike *persiflage:* he is amusing himself at Lady Olivia's expense with the most plausible gravity imaginable, and he will play his part till he has developed to his wife the character of a woman whom he cannot wish to be her companion; he defends Olivia to me upon all occasions; but I am not imposed upon, I see his whole play.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XXIII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

August 10th.

WHEN the passions are asleep we are apt to fancy they are dead. I verily thought that curiosity was dead within me, it had lain so long dormant while stronger and tenderer sentiments waked in full activity; but now that absence and distance from their object lull them to temporary repose, the vulgar subordinate passions are roused and take their turn to reign. My curiosity was so strongly excited upon the subject of Leonora's jealousy, that I could not rest, without attempting to obtain satisfaction. Blame me not, dearest Gabrielle for in my situation you would inevitably have done the same only that you would have done it with more address; with that peculiar, inimitable address, which I envy above all your accomplishments. But address is a delicate native of France and though it may now and then exist as a stranger, I doubt whether it can ever be naturalized in our rude climate. All the attempts I have made are however encouraging enough—you shall judge. My object was, to ascertain the existence or non-existence of Leonora's jealousy. I set about it with a tolerably careless assurance, and followed up the hint, which accident had thrown out for my ingenuity to work upon. You remember, or at least I remember, that Leonora withdrew her

arm from mine, and stooped to gather a flower at the moment when her husband mentioned Florence, and the resemblance of my voice to that of some Italian charmer. The next day I happened to play some of my sweetest Italian airs, and to accompany them with my voice. The music-room opens into the great hall: Leonora and her husband were in the hall, talking to some visitors. The voices were soon hushed, as I expected, by the magic sounds—but . . . . what I did not expect . . . . Leonora was the first who led the way into the music-room. Was this affectation? These *simple* characters sometimes baffle all the art of the decipherer. I should have been clear that it was affectation, had Leonora been prodigal of compliments on my performance, but she seemed only to listen for her own pleasure, and left it to Mr. L—— to applaud. Whilst I was preparing to play over again the air which pleased him most, the two little boys came running to beg Leonora would follow them to look at some trifle, some coloured shadow, upon the garden-wall, I think they said: she let them lead her off, leaving *us* together. This did not seem like jealousy. I was more at a loss than ever, and determined to make fresh and more decisive experiments. Curiosity you know is heightened by doubt. To cure myself of curiosity it is necessary therefore to put my mind out of doubt. Admire the practical application of metaphysics. But metaphysics always make you yawn.

Adieu for to-day. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXIV. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

August 17, ——.

DEAR Margaret; an uncle of mine, who ever since I can remember seemed to me cut out for an old bachelor, writes me word that he is just going to be married, and that I must grace his nuptials. I cannot refuse, for he has always been very kind to me, and we have no right to cut people out for old bachelors. That I am sorry to leave Leonora it is superfluous to tell you; but this is the melancholy part of the business, on which I make it a principle to dwell as little as possible.

Lady Olivia must be heartily glad that I am going, for I have been terribly troublesome to her by my gayety and my *simplicity*. I shall lose all the pleasure I had promised myself in seeing the *dénouement* of the comedy of *The Sentimental Coquette*, or, *The Heroine unmasked*.

I made Leonora almost angry with me this morning, by a hint or two I gave upon this subject. She looked so very

grave, that I was afraid of my own thoughts, and I dared not explain myself farther. Intimate as I am with her, there are points on which I am sure that she would never make me her confidante. I think that she has not been in her usual good spirits lately; and though she treats Olivia with uniform kindness, and betrays not, even to my watchful eyes, the slightest symptom of jealousy, yet I suspect that she sees what is going forward, and she suffers in secret. Now if she would let me explain myself, I could set her heart at ease, by the assurance that Mr. L—— is only acting a part. If her affection for her husband did not almost blind her, she would have as much penetration as I have—which you will allow, my dear Margaret, is saying a great deal.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XXV. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

August 22, ——.

CONGRATULATE me, my charming Gabrielle, upon being delivered from the unfeeling gayety of that friend of Leonora, that Helen of whom I formerly sent you a too flattering portrait. Her departure relieves me from many painful sensations. Dissonance to a musical ear is not more horrid, than want of harmony between characters to the soul of sensibility. Between Helen and me there was a perpetual discord of ideas and sentiments, which fatigued me inexpressibly. Besides, I began to consider her as a spy upon my actions. But there, I believe, I did her injustice, for she was too much occupied with her own trifling thoughts to have any alarming powers of observation.

Since her departure we have been very gay. Yesterday we had a large company at dinner. Some of the neighbouring families, whom I expected to find mere country visitors, that were to come a dozen miles to show their antediluvian finery, retire half an hour after dinner, spoil coffee with cream, say nothing, but at their appointed hours rise, ring for their superb carriages, and go home by moonlight. However, to my astonishment I found myself in a society of well-bred, well-informed persons; the women ready to converse, and the men, even after dinner, not impatient to get rid of them. Two or three of the company had travelled, and I was glad to talk to them of Italy, Switzerland and France. Mr. L—— I knew would join in this conversation. I discovered that he came to Florence just as I was leaving it. I was to have been at our Ambassador's one evening when he was there; but a headache prevented me. These little coincidences you know,

my Gabrielle, draw people closer together. I remember to have heard of a Mr. L—— at Florence, who was a passionate admirer of our sex. He was then unmarried. I little thought that this was the same person. Beneath a cold exterior, these Englishmen often conceal a wondrous quantity of enthusiasm—volcanos under snow.—Curiosity, dear indefatigable curiosity, supported me through the labour of clearing away the snow, and I came to indubitable traces of unextinguished and unextinguishable fire. The character of L—— is quite different from what I had imagined it to be. It is *an excellent study*. We had a long and interesting conversation upon national manners; especially upon those of the females of all nations. He concluded by quoting the words of your friend M. le Vicomte de Segur,

"If I were permitted to choose, I should prefer a French woman for my friend, an English woman for my wife, and a Polish lady for my mistress."

From this, it seems, that I am mistaken about the Italian Signora, or else Mr. L—— has an enlarged charity for the graces of all nations.—More subject for curiosity.

In the evening, before the company separated, we were standing on the steps of the great hall, looking at a fine effect of moon-light, and I pointed out the shadow of the arches of a bridge. From moon-light we went on to lamp-light, and many pretty things were said about art and nature. A gentleman, who had just returned from Paris, talked of the reflection of the lamps in the Seine, which one sees in crossing the Pont-royal, and which, as he said, appear like a colonade of fire. As soon as he had finished *prosing* about his colonade, I turned to Mr. L——, and asked if he remembered the account which Coxe the traveller gives of the Polish Princess Czartoryski's charming *fête champêtre* and the illuminated rustic bridge of one arch, the reflection of which in the water was so strong as to deceive the eye, and to give the whole the appearance of a brilliant circle suspended in the air. Mr. L—— seemed enchanted with my description, and eagerly said, that he would some night have a bridge in his improvements illuminated, that *we* (half-gallant Englishman!) might see the effect. I carelessly replied, that probably it would have a good effect: I would then have talked on other subjects to the lady next me: but an Englishman cannot suddenly change the course of his conversation. Mr. L—— still persisted in asking a variety of questions about this Polish fête. I excused myself: for if you satisfy curiosity you are no longer sublime; besides it is so pedantic to remember *accurately* any thing one meets with in books. I assured him that I had forgotten the particulars.

My countrymen are wondrous persevering, when once roused. This morning, when I came down to breakfast, I found Mr. L—— with a volume of Coxe's travels in his hand. He read aloud to Leonora the whole description of the illuminated gardens, and of a Turkish tent of curious workmanship, and of a pavilion supported by pillars ornamented with wreaths of flowers. Leonora's birth-day is some time in the next month; and her husband, probably to prevent any disagreeable little feelings, proposed that the *fête champêtre* he designed to give should be on that day. She seemed rather to discourage the thing. Now to what should this indifference be attributed? To jealousy I should positively decide; but that two reasons oppose this idea, and keep me in doubt. She was not within hearing at the moon-light conference, and knew nothing of my having mentioned the Polish fête, or of her husband's having proposed to illuminate the bridge for me. Besides, I remember, the other day when she was reading the new French novel you sent me, she expressed great dislike to the sentimental fêtes which the lover prepares for his mistress. I would give more than I dare tell you, my dear Gabrielle, to be able to decide whether she is jealous of me or not. But where was I?—Mr. L——, who had set his heart upon the *fête champêtre*, persisted, and combated her antipathy by reason. Foolish man! he should have tried compliments, or—caresses—if I had not been present.

"My dear Leonora," said he, "I think you carry your dislike to these things too far. They are more according to the French than to the English taste, I know; but we should not be influenced by national prejudice. I detest the ostentation and the affectation of sentiment as much as you can; but where the real feeling exists, every mode of showing kindness is agreeable. You must let us have this little fête on your birth-day. Besides the pleasure it will give me, I really think it is useful to mix ideas of affection with amusement."

She smiled most graciously, and replied, that she would with pleasure accept of kindness in any form from him. In short, she was willing to have the fête, when it was clearly explained, that she was to be the object of it. Is not this proof positive of jealousy? And yet my curiosity is not thoroughly satisfied. I must go on; for Leonora's sake I must go on. When I have been assured of the truth, I shall know how to conduct myself; and you, who know my heart, will do me the justice to believe, that when I am convinced of my friend's weakness, I shall spare it with the most delicate caution: but till I am convinced, I am in perpetual danger of blundering by my careless, inadvertent innocence. You smile, Gabrielle; dear malicious Gabrielle, even in your malice you are charming! Adieu! Pray for the speedy extinction of my curiosity.

OLIVIA.

LETTER XXVI. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

August 29th.

You say, my dearest mother, that of late my letters have been more constrained, and less cheerful than usual, and you conjure me not to conceal from you any thing which may concern my happiness. I have ever found you my best and most indulgent friend, and there is not a thought or feeling of my mind, however weak or foolish, that I desire to conceal from you. No one in this world is more—is so much interested in my happiness, and in every doubtful situation I have always been accustomed to apply to your unerring judgment for assistance. Your strength of mind, your enlightened affection, would support and direct me, would at once show me how I ought to act, and inspire me with courage and fortitude sufficient to be worthy of your esteem, and of my own. At no period of my life, not even when my heart first felt the confused sensations of a passion that was new to it, did I ever want or wish for a friend so much as at this instant: and yet I hesitate whether I ought to ask even your advice, whether I ought to indulge myself in speaking of my feelings even to my mother. I refrained from giving the slightest intimation of them to my dear Helen, though she often led to this subject, and seemed vexed by my reserve. I thought it not right to accept of her sympathy. From her kindness I had every consolation to expect, but no assistance from her counsels, because she does not understand my husband's character, and I could plainly perceive that she had an erroneous idea so fixed in her fancy, as to prevent her seeing things in their true light. I am afraid of imputing blame where I most wish to avoid it: I fear to excite unjust suspicions; I dread that if I say the whole you will imagine that I mean much more than I say.

I have not been quite well lately, and my mind probably is more apt to be alarmed than it would be if my health were stronger. All that I apprehend may exist merely in my own distempered imagination. Do not then suppose others are to blame, when perhaps I only am in fault. I have for some time past been dissatisfied with myself, and have had reason to be so: I do not say this from any false humility, I despise that affectation; but I say it with a sincere desire, that you may assist me to cure myself of a weakness, which, if it were to grow upon my mind, must render me miserable, and might destroy the happiness of the person I love best upon earth. You know that I am not naturally or habitually of a jealous temper, but I am conscious of having lately felt a disposition to jealousy. I have been spoiled by the excessive attention

which my husband paid to me in the first year of our marriage.

You warned me not to fancy that he could continue always a lover. I did not, at least I tried not to expect such an impossibility. I was prepared for the change, at least I thought I was: yet now the time, the inevitable time is come, and I have not the fortitude to bear it as I ought. If I had never known what it was to possess his love, I might perhaps be content with his friendship. If I could feel only friendship for him, I should now possibly be happy. I know that I have the first place in his esteem! I do believe—I should be miserable indeed if I did not believe—that I have the first place in his affection. But this affection is certainly different from what it once was. I wish I could forget the difference. No: I retract that wish; however painful the comparison, the recollection of times that are past is delightful to my heart. Yet, my dear mother, if such times are never to return, it would be better for me to forget that they have ever been. It would be wiser not to let my imagination recur to the past, which could then tend only to render me discontented with the present and with the future. The FUTURE! how melancholy that word sounds to me! What a dreary length of prospect it brings to my view! How young I am, how many years may I have to live, and how little motive have I left in life! Those which used to act most forcibly upon me, have now scarcely power to move my mind. The sense of duty, it is true, raises me to some degree of exertion: I hope that I do not neglect the education of the two children whom my poor sister bequeathed to my care. When my mind was at ease, they were my delight; but now I feel that I am rather interrupted than interested by their childish gayety and amusements.

I am afraid that I am growing selfish, and I am sure that I have become shamefully indolent. I go on with certain occupations every day from habit, not from choice; my mind is not in them. I used to flatter myself that I did many things from a sense of duty and of general benevolence, which I am convinced were done merely from a particular wish to please, and to make myself more and more beloved by the object of my fondest affection. Disappointed in this hope, I sink into indolence, from which the desire to entertain my friends is not sufficient to rouse me. Helen has been summoned away; but I believe I told you that Mr. and Mrs. F**, whose company is peculiarly agreeable to my taste, and Lady M***** and her amiable daughters, and your witty friend *****, are with us. In such society I am ashamed of being stupid; yet I cannot contribute to the amusement of the company, and I feel surprised at their animation and sprightliness. It seems

as if I was looking on at dances without hearing any music. Sometimes I fear that my silence should be observed, and then I begin to talk without well knowing what I am saying. I confine myself to the most common-place subjects, and hesitate, from the dread of saying something quite foreign to the purpose. What must Mr. L—— think of my stupidity? But he does not, I believe, perceive it: he is so much occupied with—with other objects.—I am glad that he does not see all that passes in my mind, for he might despise me if he knew that I am so miserable. I did not mean to use so strong an expression; but now it is written, I will not blot it out, lest you should fancy something worse than the reality. I am not however yet so weak as to be seriously *miserable* when I have no real cause to be so. The truth is ————. Now you know this phrase is a tacit confession that all that has been said before is false. The real truth is———. By my prefacing so long you may be sure that I have reason to be ashamed of this real truth's coming out. The real truth is, that I have been so long accustomed to be the first and *only* object of my husband' sthoughts,that I cannot bear to see him think of any thing else. Yes, *things* I can bear, but not *persons*—female persons.—And there is one person here ,who is so much more agreeable and entertaining than I am, that she engrosses very naturally almost all his attention. I am not *envious* I am sure; for I could once admire all Lady Olivia's talents and accomplishments, and no one could be more charmed than I was with her fascinating manners and irresistible powers of pleasing; but when those irresistible powers may rob me of the heart of my beloved husband—of the whole happiness of my life—how can I admire them? All I can promise is to preserve my mind from the meanness of suspicion. I can do my rival justice. I can believe, and entreat you to believe that she does not wish to be my rival: that she is perfectly innocent of all design to injure me, and that she is not aware of the impression she has made. I, who know every change of Mr. L——'s countenance, every inflexion of his voice, every turn of his mind, can see too plainly what she cannot discern. I should indeed have thought, that no woman, whom he distinguished or preferred in any degree, could avoid perceiving it, his manner is so expressive, so flattering: but perhaps this appears so only to me; a woman who does not love him, may see things very differently. Lady Olivia can be in no danger, because her heart, fortunately for me, is prepossessed in favour of another; and a woman whose heart is occupied by one object, is absolutely blind, as I well know, to all others. With this security I ought to be satisfied; for I believe no one inspires a lasting passion without sharing it.

I am summoned to give my opinion about certain illuminations and decoration for a *fête champêtre* which Mr. L—— is so kind as to give in honour of my birth-day—just at the time I am complaining of his neglect!——No, dear mother, I hope I have not complained of *him*, but of *myself*: and it is your business to teach your daughter to be more reasonable. Write soon and fully to

Your affectionate LEONORA.

LETTER XXVII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Sept. 12th.

THIS fine fête champêtre is over.—Expect no description of it from me, Gabrielle, for I am horribly out of humour. The whole pleasure of the evening was destroyed by the most foolish circumstance imaginable. Leonora's jealousy is now evident to more eyes than mine. No farther doubt upon the subject can remain. My curiosity is satisfied; but I am now left to reproach myself for having gone so far to ascertain what I ought to have taken for granted. All these good English wives are jealous; so jealous that no one who has any pretensions to beauty, wit or *amiability*, can live with them. They can have no *society* in our sense of the word, of course they must live shut up in their own dismal houses with their own stupid families, the faithful husband and wife sitting opposite to each other in their own chimney corners, yawning models of constancy!—and this they call virtue! How the meanest vices usurp the name of virtue! Leonora's is a jealousy of the most illiberal and degrading species; a jealousy of the temper, not of the heart. She is too cold to feel the passion of love.——She never could be in love; of that I am certain.——She is too reasonable, too prudish. Besides, to imagine that she could be in love with her own husband, and after eighteen months' marriage! the thing is absurd! the thing is impossible! No, she deceives herself or him, or both, if she pretends that her jealousy arises from love, from what you and I, Gabrielle, understand by the word. Passion, and passion only, can plead a just excuse for its own excesses. Were Leonora in love, I could pardon her jealousy. But now I despise it. Yes, with all her high reputation, and *imposing* qualities, I must think of her with contempt. And now that I have given vent to my feelings with that freedom in which I ever indulge myself in writing to you, my amiable Gabrielle, chosen friend of my heart, I will compose myself, and give you a rational account of things.

You know that I am said to have some taste.—Leonora makes no pretensions to any. Wishing, I suppose, that her fête should be as elegant as possible, she consulted me about all the arrangements and decorations. It was I that did every thing. My skill and taste were admired by the whole company, and especially by Mr. L——. He was in remarkably good spirits at the commencement of the evening; quite gay and gallant: he certainly paid me a great deal of attention, and it was natural he should; for besides being his guest, I was undoubtedly the most elegant woman present. My fame had gone abroad; I found that I was the object of general attention.—To this I have been tolerably well accustomed all my life; enough at least to prevent me from giving any visible sign of being moved by admiration in whatever form it comes; whether in the polite foreign glance, or the broad English stare. The starers enjoyed their pleasure, and I mine: I moved and talked, I smiled or was pensive, as though I saw them not; nevertheless the homage of their gaze was not lost upon me. You know, my charming Gabrielle, one likes to observe the *sensation* one produces amongst new people. The incense that I perceived in the surrounding atmosphere, was just powerful enough to affect my nerves agreeably: that languor which you have so often reproached me for indulging in the company of what we call *indifferents*, gradually dissipated; and as poor R*** used to say of me, I came from behind my cloud like the sun in all its glory. I was such as you have seen me, Gabrielle, in my best days, in my best moments, in my very best style. I wonder what could excite me to such a waste of powers. L—— seemed inspired too: he really was quite agreeable, and showed me off almost as well as R*** himself could have done. I had no idea that he had this species of talent. You will never know of what my countrymen are capable, for you are out of patience with the statues the first half hour: now it takes an amazing time to animate them; but they can be waked into life, and I have a pride in conquering difficulties.—There were more men this night in proportion to the women than one usually sees in English company, consequently it was more agreeable. I was surrounded by an admiring audience, and my conversation of course was sufficiently general to please all, and sufficiently particular to distinguish the man whom I wished to animate. In all this you will say there was nothing to put one out of humour, nothing very mortifying:—but stay, my fair philosopher, do not judge of the day till you see its end.—Leonora was so hid from my view by the crowd of adorers, that I really did not discern her, or suspect her jealousy. I was quite natural; I thought only of myself; I declined all invitations to dance, declaring that it was so long

since I had danced an English country dance, that I dare not expose my awkwardness. French country dances were mentioned, but I preferred conversation. At last L—— persecuted me to try a Polish dance with him,—a multitude of voices overpowered me. I have not the talent which some of my countrywomen possess in such perfection of being obstinate about trifles. When I can refuse with grace, 'tis well; but when that is no longer possible, it is my principle, or my weakness, to yield. I was surprised to find that L—— danced admirably. I became animated. You know how dancing animates me, when I have a partner who *can* dance—a thing not very common in this country. We ended by *walsing*, first in the Polish, and afterwards in the Parisian manner. I certainly surpassed myself, I flew, I was borne upon the wings of the wind, I floated on the notes of the music. Animated or languid in every gradation of grace and sentiment, I abandoned myself to the inspiration of the moment; I was all soul, and the spectators were all admiration. To you my Gabrielle, I may speak thus of myself without vanity: you know the sensation I was accustomed to produce at Paris; you may guess then what the effect must be here, where such a style of dancing has all the captivation of novelty. Had I doubted that my *success* was complete, I should have been assured of it by the faces of some prudes amongst the matrons, who affected to think that the walse was *too much*. As L—— was leading, or rather supporting me to my seat, for I was quite exhausted, I overheard a gentleman, who was at no great distance from the place where Leonora was standing, whisper to his neighbour, " Le Valse extrême est la volupté permise." I fancy Leonora overheard these words, as well as myself, for my eyes met hers at this instant, and she coloured, and directly looked another way. L—— neither heard nor saw any thing of all this: he was intent upon procuring me a seat; and an Englishman can never see or think of two things at a time. A few minutes afterwards, whilst he was fanning me, a young awkward creature, quite a stranger in this country, came up to me, and dropping her novice courtesy, said, " Here's a ring, my Lady, I found on the grass; they tell me it is yours, my Lady!"

" No, my good girl, it is not mine," said I.

" It is Lady Leonora's," said Mr. L——.

At the sound of her name Leonora came forward.

The girl looked alternately at us.

" Can you doubt," cried Colonel A——, " which of these ladies is Mr. L——'s wife?"

" O no, Sir; this is she *to be sure*," said the girl pointing to me.

What there was in the girl's accent, or in L——'s look, when she pronounced the words, or in mine, or in all three together, I cannot exactly describe; but Leonora felt it. She turned as pale as death. I looked as unconscious as I could. L—— went on, fanning me, without seeing his wife's change of countenance. Leonora—would you believe it?—sunk upon a bench behind us, and fainted. How her husband started, when he felt her catch by his arm as she fell! He threw down the fan, left me, ran for water—"O, Lady Leonora! Lady Leonora is ill!" exclaimed every voice. The consternation was wonderful. They carried her Ladyship to a spot where she could have free air. I was absolutely in an instant left alone, and seemingly as much forgotten as if I had never existed! I was indeed so much astonished, that I could not stir from the place where I stood; till recollecting myself, I pushed my way through the crowd, and came in view of Leonora just as she opened her eyes. As soon as she came to herself, she made an effort to stand, saying that she was quite well again, but that she would go into the house and repose herself for a few minutes. As she rose, a hundred arms were offered at once to her assistance. She stepped forward; and to my surprise, and I believe to the surprise of every body else, took mine, made a sign to her husband not to follow us, and walked quickly towards the house. Her woman, with a face of terror, met us, as we were going into Lady Leonora's apartment, with salts and hartshorn, and I know not what in her hands.

"I am quite well, quite well again; I do not want any thing: I do not want any thing. I do not want you, Mason," said Leonora. "Lady Olivia is so good as to assist me. I am come in only to rest for a few minutes."

The woman gave me an evil look, and left the room. Never did I wish any thing more than that she should have staid. I was absolutely so embarrassed, so distressed, when I found myself alone with Leonora, that I knew not what to say. I believe I began with a sentence about the night air, that was very little to the purpose. The sight of some baby-linen which Susan had been making suggested to me something which I thought more appropriate.

"My dear creature!" said I, "why will you fatigue yourself so terribly, and stand so much and so long in your situation?"

Leonora neither accepted nor rejected my interpretation of what had passed. She made no reply; but fixed her eyes upon me as if she would have read my very soul. Never did I see or feel eyes so expressive or so powerful as hers were at this moment. Mine absolutely fell beneath

them. What deprived me of presence of mind I know not; but I was utterly without common sense. I am sure I changed colour, and Leonora must have seen it through my rouge, for I had only the slightest tinge upon my cheeks. The consciousness that she saw me blush disconcerted me beyond recovery; it is really quite unaccountable; I trembled all over as I stood before her; I was forced to have recourse to the hartshorn and water, which stood upon the table. Leonora rose and threw open the window to give me fresh air. She pressed my hand, but rather with an air of forgiveness than of affection; I was mortified and vexed; but my pride revived me.

"We had better return to the company as soon as possible I believe," said she, looking down at the moving crowd below.

"I am ready to attend you, my dear," said I coldly, "whenever you feel yourself sufficiently rested and composed."

She left the room and I followed. You have no idea of the solicitude with which the people hoped she was *better*—and *well*—and *quite well*, &c. What amazing importance a fainting fit can sometimes bestow! Her husband seemed no longer to have any eyes or soul but for her. At supper, and during the rest of the night, she occupied the whole attention of every body present. Can you conceive any thing so provoking? But L—— must be an absolute fool!—Did he never see a woman faint before?—He cannot pretend to be in love with his wife—I do not understand it.—But this I know, that he has been totally different in his manner towards me these three days past.

And now that my curiosity is satisfied about Leonora's jealousy, I shall absolutely perish with ennui in this stupid place. Adieu, dearest Gabrielle! How I envy you! The void of my heart is insupportable. I must have some passion to keep me alive. Forward any letters from poor R***, if he has written under cover to you. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXVIII. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO HER DAUGHTER.

Sept. 5th.

TAKE courage, my beloved daughter; take courage. Have a just confidence in yourself and in your husband. For a moment he may be fascinated by the arts of an unprincipled woman; for a moment she may triumph over his senses, and his imagination; but of his esteem, his affection, his heart, she cannot rob you. These have been, ought to be, will be

yours. Trust to your mother's prophecy, my child. You may trust to it securely: for, well as she loves you—and no mother ever loved a daughter better—she does not soothe you with mere words of doating fondness; she speaks to you the language of reason and of truth.

I know what such a man as Mr. L—— must esteem and love; I know of what such a woman as my daughter is capable, when her whole happiness, and the happiness of all that is dear to her, are at stake. The loss of temporary admiration and power, the transient preference shown to a despicable rival, will not provoke you to imprudent reproach, nor sink you to helpless despair. The arts of an Olivia might continue to deceive your husband, if he were a fool; or to please him if he were a libertine: but he has a heart formed for love, he cannot therefore be a libertine: he is a man of superior abilities, and knows women too well to be a dupe. With a penetrating and discriminative judgment of character, he is a nice observer of female manners; his taste is delicate even to excess; under a cold exterior he has a vivid imagination and strong sensibility; he has little vanity, but a superabundance of pride; he wishes to be ardently loved, but this he conceals; it is difficult to convince him that he is beloved, and scarcely possible to satisfy him by any common proofs of attachment. A coquet will never attach Mr. L——. The admiration which others might express for her charms and accomplishments, would never pique him to competition: far from seeking "to win her praise whom all admired," he would disdain to enter the lists with the vulgar multitude: a heart in which he had a probability of holding only divided empire, would not appear to him worth the winning. As a coquet, whatever may be her talents, graces, accomplishments and address, you have nothing seriously to fear from Lady Olivia.

But, my dear, Mr. L——'s mind may be in a situation to require amusement. That species of apathy which succeeds to passion is not as the inexperienced imagine, the death of love, but the necessary and salutary repose from which it awakens refreshed and revived. Mr. L——'s passion for you has been not only tender, but violent, and the calm which inevitably succeeds should not alarm you.

When a man feels that his fondness for a wife is suspended, he is uneasy in her company, not only from the sense of decreased pleasure, but from the fear of her observation and detection. If she reproach him, affairs become worse; he blames himself, he fears to give pain, whenever he is in her presence: if he attempt to conceal his feelings, and to appear what he is no longer, a lover, his attempts are awkward; he becomes more and more dissatisfied with himself, and the

person who compels him to this hypocrisy, who thus degrades him in his own eyes, must certainly be in danger of becoming an object of aversion. A wife, who has sense enough to abstain from all reproaches, direct or indirect, by word or look, may reclaim her husband's affections: the bird escapes from his cage, but returns to his nest.

I am glad that you have agreeable company at your house; they will amuse Mr. L——, and relieve you from the necessity of taking a share in any conversation that you dislike. Our witty friend ******** will supply your share of conversation; and as to your silence, remember that witty people are always content with those who *act audience.*

I rejoice that you persist in your daily occupations. To a mind like yours, the sense of performing your duty, will, next to religion, be the firmest support upon which you can rely.

Perhaps, my dear, that even when you read this you will still be inclined to justify Lady Olivia, and to conceal from your heart the suspicions which her conduct excites. I am not surprised that you should find it difficult to believe that one to whom you have behaved so generously should treat you with treachery and ingratitude. I am not surprised, that you who feel what it is to love, should think that a woman whose heart is occupied by attachment to one object must be incapable of thinking of any other. But love in such a heart as yours is totally different from what it is in the fancy of these heroines. In their imagination the objects are as fleeting as the pictures in the clouds chased by the wind.

From Lady Olivia expect nothing: depend upon every thing from yourself. When you become, as you soon must, completely convinced that the woman in whom your unsuspecting soul confided is utterly unworthy of your esteem, refrain from all imprudent expressions of indignation. I despise, you will soon hate, your rival; but in the moment of detection think of what is due to yourself, and act as calmly as if you had never loved her. She will suffer no pain from the loss of your friendship: she has not a heart that can value it. Probably she is envious of you. All these women desire to mortify those whom they cannot degrade to their own level: and I am inclined to suspect that this malevolent feeling, joined to the want of occupation, may be the cause of her present conduct. Her manœuvres will not ultimately succeed. She will be deserted by Mr. L——, disappointed and disgraced, and your husband will be more yours than ever. When this happy moment comes, my Leonora; when your husband returns, preferring yours to all other society, then will be the time to exert all your talents, all your charms, to prove your superiority in every thing, but most in love.

The soothings of female tenderness in certain situations, have power not only to calm the feelings of self-reproach, but to diffuse delight over the soul of man. The oil, which the skilful mariner throws upon the sea, not only smooths the waves in the storm, but when the sun shines, spreads the most beautiful colours over the surface of the waters.

My dear daughter, though your mother writes seemingly at her ease, you must not fancy that she does not feel for you. Do not imagine, that in the coldness of extinguished passions, and in the pride of counselling age, your mother expects to charm agony with words. No, my child, I am not so absurd, so cruel. Your letter forced tears from eyes, which are not used like sentimental eyes to weep upon every trifling occasion. My first wish was to set out immediately to see you; but whatever consolation or pleasure my company might afford, I believe it might be disadvantageous to you in your present circumstances. I could not be an hour in the room with this Lady Olivia, without showing some portion of the indignation and contempt that I feel for her conduct. This warmth of mine might injure you in your husband's opinion. Though you would have too strong a sense of propriety, and too much dignity of mind, to make complaints of your husband to me, or to any one living; yet it might be supposed that your mother was your confidante in secret, and your partisan in public; this might destroy your domestic happiness. No husband can or ought to endure the idea of his wife's caballing against him. I admire and shall respect your dignified silence.

And now fare you well, my dearest child. May God bless you! If a mother's prayers could avail, you would be the happiest of human beings. I do, without partiality, believe you to be one of the best and most amiable of women.

LETTER XXIX. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Sept. 10th.

Had your letter, my dearest mother, reached me a few hours sooner, I should not have exposed myself as I have done.

Yesterday, at our *fête champêtre*, you would have been ashamed of me. I am ashamed of myself. I did the very reverse of what I ought, of what I would have done, if I had been fortified by your counsel. Instead of being calm and dignified, I was agitated beyond all power of control. I lost all presence of mind, all common sense, all recollection.

I know your contempt for swooning heroines. What will you say, when you hear that your daughter fainted—fainted in public? I believe, however, that, as soon as I recovered, I had sufficient command over myself to prevent the accident from being attributed to—to—to the real cause, and I hope that the very moment I came to my recollection, my manner towards Lady Olivia was such as to preclude all possibility of her being blamed or even suspected. From living much abroad, she has acquired a certain freedom of manner, and latitude of thinking, which expose her to suspicion; but of all serious intention to injure me, or to pass the bounds of propriety, I totally acquit her. She is not to blame for the admiration she excites, nor is she to be the sufferer for my weakness of mind or of health.

Great and unreasonable folly I am sure I showed—but I shall do so no more.

The particular circumstances I need not explain: you may be assured, that wherever I think it right to be silent, nothing shall tempt me to speak: but I understood by the conclusion of your letter, that you expect me to preserve an absolute silence upon this subject in future: this I will not promise. I cannot conceive that I, who do not mean to injure any human being, ought, because I am unhappy, and when I am most in want of a friend, to be precluded from the indulgence of speaking of what is nearest my heart to that dear, safe, most enlightened and honourable of friends, who has loved, guided, instructed and encouraged me in every thing that is right from my infancy. Why should I be refused all claim to sympathy, why must my thoughts and feelings be shut up in my own breast, and why must I be an isolated being, proscribed from commerce with my own family, with my beloved mother; to whom I have been accustomed to tell every feeling and idea as they rose? No, to all that is honourable I will strictly conform; but by the superstition of prudence I do not hold myself bound.

Nothing could be kinder than my husband's conduct to me the evening after I was taken ill. He left home early this morning; he is gone to meet his friend General B——, who has just returned from abroad. I hope that Mr. L—— will be absent only a few days; for it would be fatal to my happiness if he should find amusement at a distance from home. His home at all events shall never be made a cage to him; when he returns I will exert myself to the utmost to make it agreeable. This I hope can be done without obtruding my company upon him, or putting myself in competition with any person. I could wish that some fortunate accident might induce Lady Olivia to leave us before Mr. L——'s return. Had I the same high opinion of her generosity that I once

formed, had I the same perfect confidence in her integrity and in her friendship for me, I would go this moment and tell her all that passes in my heart; no humiliation of my vanity would cost me any thing if it could serve the interest of my love. No mean pride could stand in my mind against the force of affection. But there is a species of pride which I cannot, will not renounce, believing as I do, that it is the companion, the friend, the support of virtue. This pride, I trust, will never desert me; it has grown with my growth; it was implanted in my character by the education which my dear mother gave me; and, now, even by her it cannot be eradicated. Surely I have misunderstood one passage in your letter. You cannot advise your daughter to restrain just indignation against vice from any motive of policy or personal interest. You say to me, "In the moment of detection think of what is due to yourself, and act as calmly as if you had never loved her." If I *could*, I would not do this. Contempt shown by virtue is the just punishment of vice, a punishment which no selfish consideration should mitigate. If I were convinced that Lady Olivia were guilty, would you have me behave to her as if I believed her to be innocent? My countenance, my voice, my principles, would revolt from such mean and pernicious hypocrisy, degrading to the individual, and destructive to society.

May I never more see the smile of love on the lips of my husband, nor its expression in his eyes, if I do so degrade myself in my own opinion and in his! Yes, in his: for would not he, would not any man of sense or delicacy recur to that idea so common with his sex, and so just, that if a woman will sacrifice her sense of honour to her passions in one instance, she may in another. Would he not argue, "If she will do this for me because she is in love with me, why not for a new favourite, if time or accident should make me less an object of passion?"—No—I may lose my husband's love. This would be my misfortune: but to forfeit his esteem would be my fault; and, under the remorse which I should then have to endure, I am persuaded that no power of art or nature could sustain my existence.

So much for myself. As to the general good of society, that, I confess, is not at this moment the uppermost consideration in my mind! but I will add a few words on that subject, lest you should imagine me to be hurried away by my own feelings. Public justice and reason I think on my side. What would become of the good order of society or the decency of families, if every politic wife were to receive or invite, or permit her husband's mistress to reside in her house, make her a companion, an example for her daughters? What would become of conjugal virtue in either sex, if the wife

were in this manner not only to connive at the infidelity of her husband, but to encourage and provide for his inconstancy? If she enters into bonds of amity and articles of partnership with her rival, with that person by whom she has been most injured, instead of being the dignified sufferer, she becomes an object of contempt.

My dearest mother, my most respected friend, my sentiments on this subject cannot essentially differ from yours. I must have mistaken your meaning. Pray write quickly, and tell me so: and forgive, if you cannot approve of, the warmth with which I have spoken.

I am your truly affectionate and grateful daughter,

LEONORA L——.

LETTER XXX. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Sept. 20th. —.

MY amiable Gabrielle, I must be faithful to my promise of writing to you every week, though this place affords nothing new either in events or sentiment. Mr. L——'s absence made this castle insupportably dull. A few days ago he returned home, and met me with an easy kind of indifference, provoking enough to a woman who has been accustomed to excite some sensation. However, I was rejoiced at this upon Leonora's account. She was evidently delighted, and her spirits and affections seemed to overflow involuntarily upon all around her; even to me her manner became quite frank and cordial, almost caressing. She is really handsome when she is animated, and her conversation this evening quite surprised me. I saw something of that playfulness, those light touches, that versatility of expression, those words that mean more than meet the ear; every thing, in short, that could charm in the most polished foreign society. Leonora seemed to be inspired with all the arts of conversation by the simple instinct of affection. What astonished me most, was the grace with which she introduced some profound philosophical remarks. "Such pearls," said Mr. L——, "come from the deep."

With all these talents, what might not Leonora be in proper hands! But now she is nothing except to her husband and a few intimate friends.—However, this is not my affair. Let me go on to what concerns myself. You may believe my dear Gabrielle, that I piqued myself upon showing at least as much easy indifference as was shown to me.—Freedom encourages freedom. As there was no danger of my being too amiable. I did not think myself bound in honour or senti-

ment to keep myself in the shade : but I could not be as brilliant as you have seen me at your *soirêes ;* the magic circle of adorers, the inspiring power of numbers, the eclat of public *reprêsentation*, were wanting. I retired to my own apartment at night, quite out of humour with myself; and Josephine, as she undressed me, put me still further out of patience by an ill-timed history of a dispute she has had with Leonora's Swiss servant. The Swiss and Josephine it seems came to high words in defence of their mistress's charms. Josephine provoked the Swiss by saying, that his lady might possibly be handsome if she were dressed in the French taste, *mais qu' elle étoit bien Angloise*, and would be quite another thing if she had been at Paris. The Swiss retorted by observing, that Josephine's lady had indeed learnt in perfection at Paris, *the art of making herself up*, which was quite necessary to a beauty *un peu passée.* The words were not more agreeable to me than they had been to Josephine. I wonder at her assurance in repeating them—Un peu passée ! Many a woman in England, ten, fifteen years older than I am, has inspired a violent passion ; and it has been observed, that power is retained by these mature charmers longer than conquests can be preserved by inexperienced beauties. There are women who have learnt to combine, for their own advantage, and for that of their captives, all the pleasures and *conveniences* of society, all that a thorough knowledge of the world can give—women who have a sufficient attention to appearances, joined to a real contempt for all prejudices, especially that of constancy—women who possess that knowledge of the human heart, which well compensates transient bloom ; who add the expression of sentiment to beautiful features, and who, as divine Parnell says, employ

> " Gay smiles to comfort, April showers to move,
> And all the nature, all the art of Love."

——" Un peu passée." The Swiss is impertinent, and knows nothing of the matter. His master knows but little more. He would however know infinitely more if I could take the trouble to instruct him ; to which I am almost tempted for want of something better to do. Adieu, my Gabrielle. R***'s silence is perfectly incomprehensible. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXI. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Sept. 26, —.

So, my amiable Gabrielle, you are really interested in my letters, *though written during my English exile*, and you are curious to know whether any of *the potent spells* can wake into

life this man of marble. I candidly confess you would inspire me with an ambition to raise my poor countrymen in your opinion, if I were not restrained by the sacred sentiment of friendship, which forbids me to rival Leonora *even* in a husband's opinion.

However, Josephine, who feels herself a party concerned ever since her battle with the Swiss, has piqued herself upon dressing me with exquisite taste. I am every day *mise à ravir!* —and with such perfection of art, that no art appears—all is negligent simplicity. I let Josephine please herself, for you know I am not bound to be frightful because I have a friend whose husband may chance to turn his eye upon my figure, when he is tired of admiring hers. I rallied L—— the other day upon his having no eyes or ears but for his wife. Be assured I did it in such a manner, that he could not be angry. Then I went on to a comparison between the *facility* of French and English society. He admitted that there was some truth and more wit in my observations. I was satisfied. With these reasonable men, the grand point for a woman is to amuse them—they can have logic from their own sex. But, my Gabrielle, I am summoned to the *salon*, and must finish my letter another day.

Heavens! can it be a fortnight since I wrote a line to my Gabrielle!—Where was I?—"With these reasonable men the grand point for a woman is to amuse them."—True—most true!—L—— believing himself only amused with my lively nonsense, indulged himself with it continually. I was to believe only what he believed. Presently he could not do without my conversation for more than two hours together. What was I to do, my Gabrielle? I walked out to avoid him. He found me in the woods—rallied me on my taste for solitude, and quoted Voltaire.

"How charming is solitude! But we always want some one to whom we may exclaim—How charming is solitude!"

This led to a metaphysical conversation, half playful, half serious:—the distinction which a man sometimes makes to his conscience between thinking a woman entertaining, and feeling her interesting, vanishes more easily, and more rapidly, than he is aware of—at least in certain situations. This was not an observation I could make to my companion in the woods, and he certainly did not make it for himself. It would have been vanity in me to have broken off our conversation, lest he should fall in love with me—it would have been blindness not to have seen that he was in some danger. I thought of Leonora—and sighed—and did all that was in my power to

put him upon his guard.—By way of preservative, I frankly made him a confession of my attachment to R***. This I imagined would put things upon a right footing for ever: but on the contrary, by convincing him of my innocence, and of my having no designs on his heart, this candour has, I fear, endangered him still more; yet I know not what to think—his manner is so variable towards me—I must be convinced of what his sentiments are, before I can decide what my conduct ought to be. Adieu, my amiable Gabrielle. I wait for something decisive with an inexpressible degree of anxiety—I will not now call it curiosity.—Apropos, does R*** wish that I should forget that he exists? What is this business that detains him? But why do I condescend to inquire?

OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXII. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

MY DEAR L——, Sept. 27.

I SEND you the horse to which you took a fancy. He has killed one of his grooms, and lamed two; but you will be his master, and I hope he will know it.

I have a word to say to you on a more serious subject. Pardon me if I tell you that I think you are a happy man, and excuse me if I add, that if you do not keep yourself so I shall not think you a wise one. A good wife is better than a good for nothing mistress.—A self-evident proposition!—A stupid truism! Yes: but if every man who knows a self-evident proposition when he sees it on paper, always acted as if he knew it, this would be a very wise and a very happy world; and I should not have occasion to write this letter.

You say, that you are amusing yourself at the expense of a finished coquette; take care that she does not presently divert herself at yours.——"*You are proof against French coquetry and German sentiment.*"——Granted—but a fine woman?—and your own vanity?—But you have no vanity.——You call it pride then, I suppose. I will not quarrel with you for a name. Pride, properly managed, will do your business as well as vanity. And no doubt Lady Olivia knows this as well as I do. I hope you may never know it better.

I am, my dear friend, truly yours, J. B.

LETTER XXXIII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Oct. 1.

ADVISE me, dearest Gabrielle; I am in a delicate situation; and on your judgment and purity of heart I have the most perfect reliance. Know then, that I begin to believe that Leonora's jealousy was not so absolutely absurd as I at first supposed. She understood her husband better than I did. I begin to fear that I made a serious impression whilst I meant only to amuse myself. Heaven is my witness, I simply intended to satisfy my curiosity, and that once gratified, it was my determination to respect the weakness I discovered. To love Leonora, as once I imagined I could, is out of my power; but to disturb her peace, to destroy her happiness, to make use of the confidence she has reposed in me, the kindness she has shown by making me an inmate of her house—my soul shudders at these ideas. No—if her husband really loves me, I will fly. Leonora shall see that Olivia is incapable of treachery—that Olivia has a soul generous and delicate as her own, though free from the prejudices by which she is fettered. To Leonora a husband is a lover—I shall consider him as such, and respect her *property*. You are so little used, my dear Gabrielle, to consider a husband in this point of view, that you will scarcely enter into my feelings: but put yourself in my situation, allow for nationality of principle, and I am persuaded you would act as I shall. Spare me your raillery; seriously, if Leonora's husband is in love with me, would you not advise me, my dearest friend, to fly him "far as pole from pole." Write to me, I conjure you, my Gabrielle—write instantly, and tell me whether R*** is now at Paris. I will return thither immediately if you advise it. My mind is in such confusion, I have no power to decide; I will be guided by your advice. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXIV. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Paris.

ADVICE! my charming Olivia! do you ask me for advice? I never gave or took advice in my life, except for *les vapeurs noirs*. And your understanding is so far superior to mine, and you comprehend the characters of these English so much better than I do, that I cannot pretend to counsel you. This Lady Leonora is inconceivable with her passion for her own husband; but how ridiculous to let it be suspected! If her heart is so tender, cannot she, with all her charms, find a lover on whom to bestow it, without tormenting that poor Mr. L.....

Evidently he is tired of her: and I am sure I should be worn to death were I in his place. Nothing so tiresome as love without mystery and without obstacles. And this must ever be the case with conjugal love. Eighteen months married, I think you say, and Lady Leonora expects her husband to be still at her feet! And she wishes it! Truly she is the most unreasonable woman upon earth—and the most extraordinary; but I am tired of thinking of what I cannot comprehend.

Let us pass on to Mr. L..... By your last letters I should judge that he might be an agreeable man if his wife were out of the question. Matrimonial jealousy is a new idea to me; I can judge of it only by analogy. In affairs of gallantry I have sometimes seen one of the parties continue to love when the other has become indifferent, and then they go on tormenting one another and being miserable, because they have not the sense to see that a fire cannot be made of ashes. Sometimes I have found romantic young people persuade themselves that they can love no more because they can love one another no longer; but if they had sufficient courage to say—I am tired—and I cannot help it—they would come to a right understanding immediately, and part on the best terms possible, each eager to make a new choice, and to be again in love and happy. All this to be done with decency of course. And if there be no scandal, where is the harm? Can it signify to the universe whether Mons. Un-tel likes Madame Une-telle or Madame Une-autre? Provided there is love enough, all the world is in good humour, and that is the essential point; for without good humour, what becomes of the pleasures of society? As to the rest, I think of inconstancy, or *infidelity* as it is called, much as our good la Fontaine did—

"Quand on le sait c'est peu de chose—quand on ne le sait pas ce n'est rien."

To promise to love one person eternally! What a terrible engagement! It freezes my heart even to think of it. I am persuaded, that if I were bound to love him for life, I should detest the most amiable man upon earth in ten minutes—a husband more especially. Good heavens! how I should abhor M. de P—— if I saw him in this point of view. On the contrary, now I love him infinitely—that is to say, as one loves a husband. I have his interest at heart, and his glory. When I thought he was going to prison, I was in despair. I was at home to no one but *Brave-et-Tendre*, and to him, only to consult on the means of obtaining my husband's pardon. M. de P—— is sensible of this, and on my part I have no reason to complain of his liberality. We are perfectly happy, though we meet perhaps but for a few minutes in the day; and is not this better than tiring one another for four and

twenty hours? When I grow old . . . . . if ever I do . . . . . he will be my best friend. In the mean time I support his credit with all my influence. This very morning I concluded an affair for him, which never could have succeeded, if the intimate friend of the minister had not been also my lover. Now, why cannot your Lady Leonora and her Mr. L—— live on the same sort of terms? But if English manners will not permit of this, I have nothing more to say. Above all things a woman must respect opinion, else she cannot be well received in the world. I conclude this is the secret of Lady Leonora's conduct. But then jealousy!—no woman I suppose is bound, even in England, to be jealous in order to show her love for her husband. I lose myself again in trying to understand what is incomprehensible.

As to you, my dear Olivia, you also amaze me by talking of *crimes* and *horror*, and *flying from pole to pole* to avoid a man because you have made him at last find out that he has a heart! You have done him the greatest possible service: it may preserve him perhaps from hanging himself next November—that month in which, according to Voltaire's philosophical calendar, Englishmen always hang themselves, because the atmosphere is so thick and their ennui so heavy. Lady Leonora, if she really loves her husband, ought to be infinitely obliged to you for averting this danger. As to the rest, your heart is not concerned, so you can have nothing to fear; and as for a platonic attachment on the part of Mr. L——, his wife, even according to her own rigid principles, cannot blame you.

Adieu, my charming friend! Instead of laughing at your fit of prudery, I ought to encourage your scruples, that I might profit by them. If they should bring you to Paris immediately, with what joy should I embrace my Olivia, and how much gratitude should I owe to the jealousy of Lady Leonora L——!

R*** is not yet returned. When I have any news to give you of him, depend upon it you shall hear from me again. Accept, my interesting Olivia, the vows of my most tender and eternal friendship. GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER XXXV. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——

Oct. 15th. —

Your charming letter, my Gabrielle, has at once revived my spirits and dissipated all my scruples; you mistake, however, in supposing that Leonora is in love with her husband: more and more reason have I every hour to be convinced that Leo-

nora has never known the passion of love; consequently her jealousy was, as I at first pronounced it to be, the selfish jealousy of matrimonial power and property. Else, why does it subside, why does it vanish, when, if it were a jealousy of the heart, it has now more provocation, infinitely more than when it appeared in full force? Leonora could see that her husband distinguished me at a *fête champêtre*; she could see what the eyes of others showed her; she could hear what envy whispered, or what scandal hinted; she was mortified, she was alarmed even to fainting by a public preference, by a silly country girl's mistaking me for *the wife*, and doing homage to me as to the Lady of the manor; but Leonora cannot perceive in the object of her affection the symptoms that mark the rise and progress of *a real love*. Leonora feels not the little strokes, which would be fatal blows to the peace of a truly delicate mind; she heeds not "the trifles light as air," which would be confirmation strong to a soul of genuine sensibility. My influence over the mind of L—— increases rapidly, and I shall let it rise to its acme before I seem to notice it. Leonora, re-assured, I suppose, by a few flattering words, and more perhaps by an exalted opinion of her own merit, has lately appeared quite at her ease, and blind to all that passes before her eyes. It is not for me to dissipate this illusion prematurely, it is not for me to weaken this confidence in her husband. To an English wife this would be death. Let her foolish security then last as long as possible. After all, how much anguish of heart, how many pangs of conscience, how much of the torture of pity am I spared by this callous temper in my friend! I may indulge in a little harmless coquetry without danger to her peace and without scruple enjoy the dear possession of power.

Oct. 18, —.

"Say, for you know," charming Gabrielle, what is the delight of obtaining power over the human heart? Let the Lords of the creation boast of their power to govern all things; to charm these Governors be ours, Gabrielle. Let the logicians of the earth boast their power to regulate the world by reason; to intoxicate and humble proud reason to the dust beneath our feet, Gabrielle, be ours.—And who shall blame in us this ardour for universal dominion? If they are men I call them tyrants—if they are women I call them hypocrites—and the two vices which I most detest are tyranny and hypocrisy. Frankly I confess, that I feel in all its restless activity the passion for general admiration. I cannot conceive, can you, Gabrielle, a pleasure more trans-

porting than the perception of extended and extending dominion. The struggle of the rebel heart for freedom makes the war more tempting, the victory more glorious, the triumph more splendid. Secure of your sympathy, ma belle Gabrielle, I shall not fear to tire you by my commentaries.

Oct. 21, —.

Male coquetry justifies female retaliation to any imaginable extent. Upon this principle, on which I have seen you act so often, and so successfully, my amiable Gabrielle, I shall now intrepidly proceed. This man makes a show of resistance; be it at his own peril: he thinks that he is gaining power over my heart, whilst I am preparing torments for his; he fancies that he is throwing chains round me, whilst I am riveting fetters from which he will in vain attempt to escape. He is proud, and has the insanity of desiring to be exclusively beloved, yet affects to set no value upon the preference that is shown to him, appears satisfied with his own approbation, and stoically all-sufficient to his own happiness. Leonora does not know how to manage his temper, but I do. The suspense however in which he keeps me is tantalizing: he shall pay for it hereafter: I had no idea, till lately, that he had so much self-command. At times he has actually made me doubt my own power. At certain moments I have been half-tempted to believe that I had made no serious impression, that he had been only amusing himself at my expense, and for Leonora's gratification: but upon careful and cool observation I am convinced that his indifference is affected, that all his stoicism will prove vain. The arrow is lodged in his heart, and he must fall, whether he turns upon the enemy in anger, or flies in dismay.

—, 23.

My pride is exasperated. I am not accustomed to such obstinate resistance. I really almost hate this invincible man, and . . . . . strange inconsistency of the human heart! . . . . almost love him. Heaven and pride preserve me from such a weakness! But there is certainly something that piques and stimulates one's feelings in this species of male coquetry. L—— understands the business better than I thought he could. One moment my knowledge of the arts of his sex puts me on my guard; the next my sensibility exposes me in the most terrible manner. Experience ought to protect me, but she only shows me the peril and my inability to escape. Ah! Gabrielle, without a heart how

safe we should be, how dangerous to our lovers! But cursed with sensibility, we must, alas! submit to our fate. The habit of loving, *le besoin d'aimer*, is more powerful than all sense of the folly and the danger. Nor is the tempest of the passions so dreadful as the dead calm of the soul. Why did R*** suffer my soul to sink into this ominous calm? The fault is his; let him abide the consequence. Why did he not follow me to England? Why did he not write to me? or when he did write, why were his letters so cold, so spiritless? When I spoke of divorce, why did he hesitate? Why did he reason when he should have only felt? Tell him, my tender, my delicate friend, these are questions which the heart asks, and which the heart only can answer. Adieu.

OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXVI. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Paris.

JE suis excedée! mon cœur. Alive, and but just alive, after such a day of fatigues! All morning from one minister to another! then home to my toilette! then a great dinner with a number of foreigners, each to be distinguished; then au Feydeau, where I was obliged to go support poor S——'s play, which would be really insupportable, if it were not for the finest music in the world, which, after all, the French music certainly is. There was a violent party against the piece; and we were so late, that it was just on the point of perishing. My ears have not yet recovered from the horrid noise. In the midst of the tumult I fortunately, by a masterstroke, turned the fortune of the night. I spied the shawl of an English woman hanging over the box. This, you know, like scarlet to the bull, is sufficient to enrage the Parisian pit. To the shawl I directed the fury of the mob of critics. Luckily for us, the Lady was attended only by an Englishman, who of course chose to assert his right not to understand the customs of any country, or submit to any will but his own. He would not permit the shawl to be stirred. A bas! à bas! resounded from below. The uproar was inconceivable. You would have thought that the house must have come down. In the mean time the piece went on, and the shawl covered all its defects. Admire my generalship. T—— tells me I was born for a general; yet I rather think my forte is negociation.

But I have not yet come to your affairs, for which alone I could undergo the fatigue of writing at this moment. Guess, my Olivia, what apparition I met at the door of my box to-

night. But the enclosed note will save you the trouble of guessing. I could not avoid permitting him to slide his billet doux into my hand as he put on my shawl. Adieu. I must refuse myself the pleasure of conversing longer with my sweet friend. Fresh toils await me. Madame la Grande will never forgive me if I do not appear for a moment at her soirée: and la petite Q—— will be jealous beyond recovery if I do not give her a moment: and it is Madame R——'s night. There I must be; for all the Ambassadors, as usual, will be there; and as some of them, I have reason to believe, go on purpose to meet me, I cannot disappoint their Excellencies. My friends would never forgive it. I am positively quite weary of this life of eternal bustle; but once in the eddy, one is carried round and round; there is no stopping. Adieu, adieu. I write under the hands of Victoire. O that she had your taste to guide her, and to decide my too vacillating judgment; we should then have no occasion to dread even the elegant simplicity of Madame R——'s toilette.

GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER XXXVII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Oct. 31, —.

MY Gabrielle, I have read R***'s note inclosed in your charming sprightly letter. What a contrast! So cold! so formal! A thousand times rather would I not have heard from him, than have received a letter so little in unison with my feelings. He talks to me of business. Business! What business ought to detain a man a moment from the woman he loves? The interests of his ambition are nothing to me. What are all these to love; is he so mean as to hesitate between them? then I despise him! and Olivia can never love the being she despises!

Does R*** flatter himself that his power over my heart is omnipotent? Does he imagine that Olivia is to be slighted with impunity? Does R*** think that a woman who has even nominally the honour to reign over his heart, cannot meditate new conquests! O credulous vanity of man! He fancies perhaps that he is secure of the maturer age of one who fondly devoted to him her inexperienced youth. "Security is the curse of fools." Does he in his wisdom deem a woman's age a sufficient pledge for her constancy? He might every day see examples enough to convince him of his error. In fact, the age of women has nothing to do with the number of their years. Possibly, however, the gallant gentleman may be of opinion with Leonora's Swiss, that lady Olivia is

un peu passée. Adieu, my dear friend; you, who always understand and sympathize in my feelings, you will express them for me in the best manner possible. I shall not write to R***. You will see him; and Olivia commits to you what to a woman of delicacy is more dear than her love—her just resentment. OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXVIII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Nov. 14, —.

PITY me, dearest Gabrielle, for I am in need of all the pity which your susceptible heart can bestow. Never was woman in such a terrible situation! Yes, Gabrielle, this provoking, this incomprehensible, this too amiable man, has entangled your poor friend past recovery. Her sentiments and sensations must henceforward be in eternal opposition to each other. Friendship, gratitude, honour, virtue, all in tremendous array, forbid her to think of love; but love, imperious love, will not be so defied: he seizes upon his victim, and now, as in all the past, will be the ruler, the tyrant of Olivia's destiny. Never was confusion, amazement, terror, remorse, equal to mine, Gabrielle, when I first discovered that I loved him. Who could have foreseen, who could have imagined it? I meant but to satisfy an innocent curiosity, to indulge harmless coquetry, to gratify the natural love of admiration, and to enjoy the possession of power. Alas! I felt not that whilst I was acquiring ascendency over the heart of another I was beguiled of all command over my own. I flattered myself that when honour should bid me stop I could pause without hesitation, without effort: I promised myself, that the moment I should discover that I was loved by the husband of my friend I should fly from him for ever. Alas! it is no longer time—to fly from him is no longer in my power. Oh Gabrielle! I love him. He knows that I love him. Never did woman suffer more than I have done since I wrote to you last. The conflict was too violent for my feeble frame. I have been ill—very ill—a nervous fever brought me nearly to the grave. Why did I not die? I should have escaped the deep humiliation, the endless self-reproach to which my future existence is doomed.—Leonora!—Why do I start at that name? Oh! there is horror in the sound! Even now perhaps she knows and triumphs in my weakness. Even now perhaps her calm insensible soul blesses itself for not being made like mine. Even now perhaps her husband doubts whether he shall accept Olivia's love, or sacrifice your wretched friend to Leonora's pride. Oh Gabrielle, no words can describe what I suf-

fer! But I must be calm, and explain the progress of this fatal passion. Explain! Heavens! how shall I explain what I cannot recollect without heart-rending anguish and confusion! Oh Gabrielle! pity

Your distracted OLIVIA.

LETTER XXXIX. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Monday.

MY dear romantic Olivia! you must have a furious passion for tormenting yourself, when you can find matter for despair in your present situation. In your place I should rejoice to find that in the moment an old passion had consumed itself, a new one, fresh and vigorous, springs from its ashes. My charming friend, understand your own interests, and do not be the dupe of those fine phrases that we are obliged to employ to deceive others. Rail at Cupid as much as you please to the men in public, *par façon*, but always remember for your private use, that love is essential to our existence in society. What is a woman when she neither loves nor is loved? a mere *personage muet* in the drama of life. Is it not from our lovers that we derive our consequence? Even a beauty without lovers is but a queen without subjects. A woman who renounces love, is an abdicated sovereign, always longing to resume her empire when it is too late; continually forgetting herself like the pseudo-philosophic Christina, talking and acting as though she had still the power of life and death in her hands. A tyrant without guards or slaves. A most awkward, pitiable, and ridiculous personage. No, my fair Olivia, let us never abjure love. Even when the reign of beauty passes away, that of grace and sentiment remains. As much delicacy as you please; without delicacy there is no grace, and without a veil beauty loses her most captivating charms. I pity you, my dear, for having let your veil be blown aside *malheureusement*. But such accidents will happen. Who can control the passions or the winds? After all, *l'erreur d' un moment* is not irretrievable, and you reproach yourself too bitterly, my sweet friend, for your involuntary injustice to Lady Leonora. Assuredly it could not be your intention to sacrifice your repose to Mr. L——. You loved him against your will, did you not? And it is, you know, by the intention that we must judge of actions: the positive harm done to the world in general is in all cases the only just measure of criminality. Now what harm is done to the universe, and what injury can accrue to any individual, provided you keep your own counsel? As long your friend is deceived she

is happy; it therefore becomes your duty, your virtue to dissemble. I am no great casuist, but all this appears to me self-evident; and these I always thought were your principles of philosophy. My dear Olivia, I have drawn out my whole store of metaphysics with some difficulty for your service; I flatter myself I have set your poor distracted head to rights. One word more—for I like to go to the bottom of a subject—when I can do so in two minutes. Virtue is desirable because it makes us happy; consequently, to make ourselves happy is to be truly virtuous. Methinks this is sound logic.

To tell you the truth, my dear Olivia, I do not well conceive how you have contrived to fall in love with this half-frozen Englishman. 'Tis done however—there is no arguing against facts; and this is only one proof more of what I have always maintained, that destiny is inevitable and love irresistible. Voltaire's charming inscription on the statue of Cupid is worth all the volumes of reasoning and morality that ever were or ever will be written:—

> "Qui que tu sois, voici ton maitre:
> Il l'est, le fut, ou le doit etre."

Banish melancholy thoughts, my dear friend; they serve no manner of purpose but to increase your passion. Repentance softens the heart; and every body knows, that what softens the heart disposes it more to love: for which reason I never abandon myself to this dangerous luxury of repentance. Mon Dieu! Why will people never profit by experience? And to what purpose do they read history? Was not la Valliere ever penitent and ever transgressing? ever in transports or in tears? You at all events, my Olivia, can never become a Carmelite or a Magdalen. You have emancipated yourself from superstition: but whilst you ridicule all religious orders, do not inflict upon yourself their penances. The habit of some of the orders has been thought becoming. The modest costume of a nun is indeed one of the prettiest dresses one can wear at a masquerade ball, and it might even be worn without a mask, if it were fashionable: but nothing that is not fashionable can be becoming.

Adieu, my adorable Olivia: I will send you by the first opportunity your Lyons gown, which is really charming.

GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER XL. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Nov. 30, —.

Your truly philosophical letter, my infinitely various Gabrielle, infused a portion of its charming spirit into my soul. My mind was fortified and elevated by your eloquence. Who would think that a woman of such a lively genius could be so profound? and who could expect from a woman, who has passed her life in the world, such original and deep reflections? You see you were mistaken when you thought that you had no genius for philosophic subjects.

After all that has been said by metaphysicians about the existence and seat of the moral sense, I think I can solve every difficulty by a new theory. You know some philosophers suppose the moral sense to be intuitive and inherent in man: others who deny the doctrine of innate ideas, treat this notion of innate sentiments as equally absurd. There they certainly are wrong, for sentiments are widely different from ideas, and I have that within me which convinces my understanding that sentiments must be innate, and proportioned to the delicacy of our sensibility. No person of common sense or feeling can doubt this. But there are other points which I own puzzled me till yesterday. Some metaphysicians would seat the moral sense inherently in the heart, others would place it intuitively in the brain, all would confine it to the soul; now in my opinion it resides primarily and principally in the nerves, and varies with their variations. Hence the difficulty of making the moral sense a universal guide of action, since it not only differs in many individuals, but in the same person at different periods of their existence, or (as I have often experienced) at different hours of the day. All this must depend upon the mobility of the nervous system: upon this may *hinge* the great difficulties which have puzzled metaphysicians respecting consciousness, identity, &c. If they had attended less to the nature of the soul, and more to the system of the nerves, they would have avoided innumerable errors, and probably would have made incalculably important discoveries. Nothing is wanting but some great German genius to bring this idea of a moral sense in the nerves into fashion. Indeed if our friend Madame *** would mention it in the notes to her new novel, it would introduce it in the most satisfactory manner possible to all the fashionable world abroad, and we take our notions in this country implicitly from the continent. As for you, my dear Gabrielle, I know you cut the gordian knot at once, by referring, with your favourite moralist, every principle of human nature to self-love. This does not quite accord with my ideas; there is something harsh in it, that is repugnant to my sensibility; but you have

a stronger mind than I have, and perhaps your theory is right.

"You tell me I contradict myself continually," says the acute and witty Duke de la Rochefoucault: "No, but the human heart, of which I treat, is in perpetual contradiction to itself." Permit me to avail myself of this answer, dear Gabrielle, if you should accuse me of contradicting in this letter all that I said to you in my last. A few hours after I had despatched it the state of my nerves changed, I saw things of course in a new light, and repented having exposed myself to your raillery by writing in such a magdalen strain. My nerves were more in fault than I. When one's mind or one's nerves grow weak, the early associations and old prejudices of the nursery recur, and tyrannize over one's reason: from this evil your liberal education and enviable temperament have preserved you; but have charity for my feminine weakness of frame, which too often counteracts the masculine strength of my soul. Now that I have deprecated your ridicule for my last nervous nonsense, I will go on in a more rational manner. However my better judgment might have been clouded for a moment, I have recovered strength of mind enough to see that I am in no way to blame for any thing that has happened. If a man is amiable, and if I have taste and sensibility, I must see and feel it. "To love," as I remember your friend G****** once finely observed to you, "to love is a crime only in the eyes of demons, or of priests who resemble demons." This is a general proposition to which none but the prejudiced can refuse their assent: and what is true in general must be true in particular. The *accident*, I use the term philosophically, not popularly, the accident of a man's being married, or, in other words, having entered imprudently into a barbarous and absurd civil contract, cannot alter the nature of things. The essence of truth cannot be affected by the variation of external circumstances. Now the proper application of metaphysics frees the mind from vulgar prejudices, and dissipates the baby terrors of an ill-educated conscience. To fall in love with a married man, and the husband of your intimate friend! How dreadful this sounds to some ears! even mine were startled at first, till I called reason to my assistance. Then I had another difficulty to combat—— to own, and own unasked, a passion to the object of it, would shock the false delicacy of those who are governed by common forms, and who are slaves to vulgar prejudices: but a little philosophy liberates our sex from the tyranny of custom, teaches us to disdain hypocrisy, and to glory in the simplicity of truth.

Josephine had been perfuming my hair, and I was sitting reading at my toilette, the door of my dressing-room happen-

ed to be half open; L—— was crossing the gallery, and as he passed I suppose his eye was caught by my hair, or perhaps he paused a moment, I am not certain how it was—my eyes were on my book.

"Ah! vous avez raison, Monsieur, c'est la plus belle chevelure! Mais entrez donc, Monsieur," cried Josephine—whom I can never teach to comprehend or respect English customs—"Eh! entrez, entrez, Monsieur, Madame est à sa toilette."

As I looked up I could not forbear smiling at the extreme ease and decision of Josephine's manner, and the excessive doubt and anxiety in the gentleman's appearance. My smile, which, Heaven knows, meant no encouragement, decided him; timidity instantly gave way to joy, he entered. What was to be done? I could not turn him out again; I was not answerable for any foolish conclusions he might draw from what he ought in politeness to have considered as a thing of course. All I could do was to blame Josephine for being a French woman. To defend her, and flatter me, was the gentleman's part; and, for an Englishman, he really acquitted himself with tolerable grace. Josephine at least was pleased, and she found such perpetual employment for Monsieur, and his advice was so necessary, that there was no chance of his departure: so we talked of French *toilettes*, &c. &c. in French for Josephine's edification: L—— paid me some compliments upon the recovery of my looks after my illness—I thought I looked terribly languid—but he assured me that this languor in his eyes was an additional grace; I could not understand this; he fancied that must be because he did not express himself well in French; he explained himself more clearly in English, which Josephine, you know, does not understand, so that she was now forced to be silent, and I was compelled to take my share in the conversation. L—— made me comprehend, that languor indicating sensibility of heart was to him the most touching of female charms: I sighed—and took up the book I had been reading; it was the new novel which you sent me, dear Gabrielle; I talked of it in hopes of changing the course of the conversation; alas! this led to one far more dangerous: he looked at the passage I had been reading. This brought us back to sensibility again—to sentiments and descriptions so terribly apposite! we found such a similarity in our tastes! Yet L—— spoke only in in general, and he preserved a command over himself, which provoked me, though I knew it to be coquetry; I saw the struggle in his mind, and was determined to force him to be candid, and to enjoy my triumph. With these views I went farther than I had intended. The charm of sensibility he had told me was to him irresistible. Alas! I let him perceive all the weakness of my heart.—Sensibility is the worst time-keeper in the

world. We were neither of us aware of its progressive motion. The Swiss—my evil genius—the Swiss knocked at the door to let me know dinner was served. Dinner! on what vulgar incidents the happiness of life depends! Dinner came between the discovery of my sentiments and that declaration of passion which I now must hear—or die.

"Le dinér! mon Dieu!" cried Josephine. "Mais ..... finissons donc, ... la toilette de Madame."

I heard the impertinent Swiss at the other end of the gallery at his master's door, wondering in broken English where his master could be, and conjecturing forty absurdities about his boots, and his being out riding, &c. &c. To sally forth in conscious innocence upon the enemy's spies, and to terminate the adventure as it was begun, *à la Françoise*, was my resolution. L—— and Josephine understood me perfectly.

"Eh! Monsieur de Vaud," said Josephine to the Swiss, whom we met on the landing-place of the stairs, "Madame n'est elle pas coeffé à ravir aujourd'hui? C'est que Monsieur vient d'assister à la toilette de Madame." The Swiss bowed, and said nothing. The bow was to his master, not to me, and it was a bow of duty, not of inclination. I never saw a man look so like a machine; he did not even raise his eyes upon me or my *coëffure* as we passed.

Bah! cried Josephine, with an inexpressible accent of mingled indignation and contempt. She ran down stairs, leaving the Swiss to his stupidity. I was more afraid of his penetration. But I entered the dining-room as if nothing extraordinary had happened; and after all, you know, my dear Gabrielle, nothing extraordinary had befallen us. A gentleman had assisted at a lady's toilette. Nothing more simple, nothing more proper in the meridian of Paris; and does propriety change with meridians? There was company at dinner, and the conversation was general and uninteresting; L——endeavoured to support his part with vivacity; but he had fits of absence and silence, which might have alarmed Leonora, if she had any suspicion. But she is now perfectly secure, and absolutely blind: therefore you see there can be no danger for her happiness in my remaining where I am. For no earthly consideration would I disturb her peace of mind; there is no sacrifice I would hesitate for a moment to make to friendship or virtue, but I cannot surely be called upon to *plant a dagger in my own heart* to destroy, for ever to destroy my own felicity without advantage to my friend. My attachment to L——, as you say, is involuntary, and my love as pure as it is fervent. I have reason to believe that his sentiments are the same for me; but of this I am not yet certain. There is

the danger, and the only real danger for Leonora's happiness; for whilst this uncertainty and his consequent fits of absence and imprudence last, there is hazard every moment of her being alarmed. But when L—— once decides, every thing arranges itself you know, Gabrielle, and prudence becomes a duty to ourselves and to Leonora. No word, or look, or coquetry, could then escape us: we should be unpardonable if we did not conduct ourselves with the most scrupulous delicacy and attention to her feelings. I am amazed that L——, who has really a good understanding, does not make these reflections, and is not determined by this calculation. For his, for my own, but most for Leonora's sake, I wish that this cruel suspense were at an end. Adieu, dear and amiable Gabrielle.—These things are managed better in France.

OLIVIA.

LETTER XLI. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

DEAR MARGARET, Dec. 7th, —.

I ARRIVED here late yesterday evening in high spirits, and high hopes of surprising and delighting all the world by my unexpected appearance, but my pride was checked and my tone changed the moment I saw Leonora. Never was any human being so altered in her looks in so short a time. I had just, and but just presence of mind enough not to say so. I am astonished that it does not strike Mr. L——. As soon as she left the room I asked him if Lady Leonora had been ill? No; perfectly well! perfectly well!—Did not he perceive that she looked extremely ill? No; she might be paler than usual; that was all that Mr. L—— had observed. Lady Olivia, after a pause, added, that Leonora certainly had not appeared well lately, but this was nothing extraordinary in her *situation.—Situation!* Nonsense! Lady Olivia went on with sentimental hypocrisy of look and tone, saying fine things, to which I paid little attention. Virtue in words, and vice in actions! thought I. People of certain pretensions in the court of sentiment think that they can pass false virtues upon the world for real, as some ladies, entitled by their rank to wear jewels, appear in false stones, believing that it will be taken for granted they would wear nothing but diamonds. Not one eye in a hundred detects the difference at first, but in time the hundredth eye comes, and then they must for ever hide their diminished rays. Beware! Lady Olivia, beware!

Leonora is ill, or unhappy, or both; but she will not allow that she is either. On one subject she is impenetrable; a

hundred, a thousand different ways within these four and twenty hours have I led to it with all the ingenuity and all the delicacy of which I am mistress; but all to no purpose. Neither by provocation, persuasion, laughing, teasing, questioning, cross or round about, pushing, squeezing, encompassing, taking for granted, wondering, or blundering, could I gain my point. Every look guarded—every syllable measured—yet unequivocal—

"She said no more than just the thing she ought."

Because I could find no fault I was half angry. I respect the motive of this reserve; but towards me it is misplaced, and ill judged, and it must not exist. I have often declared that I would never condescend to play the part of a confidante to any princess or heroine upon earth. But Leonora is neither princess nor heroine, and I would be her confidante, but she will not let me. Now I am punished for my pride. If she would only trust me, if she would only tell me what has passed since I went, and all that now weighs upon her mind, I could certainly be of some use. I could and would say every thing that she might scruple to hint to Lady Olivia, and I will answer for it I would make her raise the seige. But I cannot believe Mr. L—— to be such a madman as to think of attaching himself seriously to a woman like Olivia, when he has such a wife as Leonora. That he was amusing himself with Olivia I saw, or thought I saw some time ago, and I rather wondered that Leonora was uneasy: for all husbands will flirt, and all wives must bear it, thought I. When such a coquette as this fell in his way, and made advances, he would have been more than man if he had receded. Of course I thought, he must despise and laugh at her all the time he was flattering and gallanting her ladyship. This would have been fair play, and comic; but the comedy should have ended by this time. I am now really afraid it will turn into a tragedy. I, even I! am alarmed. I must prevail upon Leonora to speak to me without reserve. I see her suffer, and I must share her grief. Have not I always done so from the time we were children; and now, when she most wants a friend, am not I worthy to share her confidence? Can she mistake friendship for impertinent curiosity? Does not she know that I would not be burthened with the secrets of any body whom I did not love? If she thinks otherwise, she does me injustice, and I will tell her so before I sleep. She does not know how well I love her.

Dec. 12,—.

My dear Margaret, Leonora and I have had a quarrel—the first serious quarrel we ever had in our lives; and the end of

it is, that she is an angel, and I am a fool. Just as I laid down my pen after writing to you, though it was long past midnight, I marched into Leonora's apartment, resolved to surprise or to force her confidence. I found her awake, as I expected, and up and dressed as I did not expect, sitting in her dressing-room, her head leaning upon her hand, dear soul! I knew what she was thinking of, she had a heap of her husband's old letters beside her. She denies that she was in tears, and I will not swear to the tears, but I think I saw signs of them notwithstanding. I spoke out; but in vain—all in vain. At last I flew into a passion, and reproached her bitterly. She answered me with that air of dignified tenderness which is peculiar to her—"If you believe me to be unhappy, my dear Helen, is this a time to reproach me unjustly?" I was brought to reason and to tears, and after asking pardon like a foolish naughty child, was kissed and forgiven, upon a promise never to do so any more; a promise, which I hope Heaven will grant me grace and strength of mind enough to keep. I was certainly wrong to attempt to force her secret from her. Leonora's confidence is always given, never yielded; and in her openness is a virtue, not a weakness. But I wish she would not contrive to be always in the right. In all our quarrels, in all the variations of my humour, I am obliged to end by doing homage to her reason, as the Chinese mariners, in every change of weather, burn incense before the needle.

Your affectionate HELEN C——

LETTER XLII. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR GENERAL, Dec. 13, —.

I HOPED that you would have favoured us with a passing visit in your way to town, but I know you will tell me that friendship must not interfere with the interests of the service. I have reason to curse those interests of the service, they are for ever at variance with mine. I had a particular desire to speak to you upon a subject which it is not agreeable to me to write. Lady Leonora also wished extremely and disinterestedly for your company. She does not know how much she is obliged to you. The laconic advice you gave me some time ago influenced my conduct longer than counsel which is in opposition to our passions usually does, and it has haunted my imagination perpetually.

"My dear L——, do not end by being the dupe of a *frenchified* coquette."

My dear friend, of that there is no danger. No man upon earth despises or detests coquettes more than I do, be they French or English. I think, however, that a foreign-born, or foreign-bred coquette, has more of the ease of *practice*, and less of the awkwardness of conscience, than a home-bred flirt, and is in reality less blameable, for she breaks no restraints of custom or education; she does only what she has seen her mother do before her, and what is authorized by the example of most of the fashionable ladies of her acquaintance. But let us put flirts and coquettes quite out of the question. My dear General, you know that I am used to women, and take it upon my word, that the lady to whom I allude is more tender and passionate than vain. Every woman has, or has had, a tincture of vanity; but there are a few, and those are to me the most amiable of the sex, who

> "Feel every vanity in fondness lost."

You know that I am delicate, even fastidious, in my taste for female manners. Nothing can in my opinion make amends for any offence against propriety, except it be sensibility—genuine, generous sensibility. This can, in my mind, cover a multitude of faults. There is so much of selfishness, of hypocrisy, of coldness, in what is usually called female virtue, that I often turn with distaste from those, to whom I am compelled to do homage for the sake of the general good of society. I am not *charlatan* enough to pretend upon all occasions to prefer the public advantage to my own. I confess, that let a woman be ever so fair, or good, or wise:

> "Be she with that goodness blest
> Which may merit name of best,
> If she be not such to me,
> What care I how good she be?"

And I will further acknowledge, that I am not easily satisfied with the manner in which a woman is kind to me: if it be duty-work kindness, I would not give thanks for it: it is done for her reputation, not for me, and let the world thank her. To *the best of wives* I should make the worst of husbands. No—I should, I hope, pay her in her own coin, with all due observances, attentions and respect, but without one grain of love. Love is only to be had for love; and without it, nothing a woman can give appears to me worth having. I do not desire to be loved well enough to satisfy fathers and mothers, and uncles and aunts: well enough to decide a woman to marry me rather than disoblige her friends, or run the chance of having *many a worse offer*, and living perhaps to be an old maid. I do not desire to be loved well enough to keep a woman true and faithful to me "*till death us do part:*" in short.

I do not desire to be loved well enough for a husband; I desire to be loved sufficiently for a lover; not only above all other persons, but above all other things, all other considerations, to be the first and last object in the heart of the woman to whom I am attached; I wish to feel that I sustain and fill the whole of her heart. I must be certain that I am every thing to her, as she is every thing to me; that there is no imaginable situation in which she would not live with me, in which she would not be happy to live with me; no possible sacrifice that she would not make for me; or rather, that nothing she could do should appear a sacrifice. Are these exorbitant expectations? I am capable of all this, and more, for a woman I love; and it is my pride or my misfortune to be able to love upon no other terms. Such proofs of attachment it may be difficult to obtain, and even to give; more difficult, I am sensible, for a wife than for a mistress. A young lady who is married *secundum artem*, with license and consent of friends, can give no extraordinary instances of affection. I should not consider it as an indisputable proof of love, that she does me the honour to give me her hand in a church, or that she condescends to bespeak my liveries, or to be handed into her own coach with all the blushing honours of a bride; all the paraphernalia of a wife secured, all the prudent and necessary provision made both for matrimonial love and hatred, dower, pin-money, and separate maintenance on the one hand, and on the other, lands, tenements and hereditaments for the future son and heir, and sums without end for younger children to the tenth and twentieth possibility, *as the case may be, nothing herein contained to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.* Such a jargon Cupid does not understand. A woman may love this most convenient personage, her lawful husband; but I should think it difficult for the delicacy of female passion to survive the cool preparations for hymeneal felicity. At all events, you will allow the lady makes no sacrifice, she shows no great generosity, and she may, or she may not be touched at the altar by the divine flame. My good General, when you are a husband you will feel these things as I do; till then, it is very easy to talk as you do, and to admire other men's wives, and to wish Heaven had blessed you with such a treasure. For my part, the single idea, that a woman thinks it her duty to be fond of me, would deprive me of all pleasure in her love. No man can be more sensible than I am of the amiable and estimable qualities of Lady Leonora L——; I should be a brute and a liar if I hesitated to give the fullest testimony in her praise; but such is the infirmity of my nature, that I could pardon some faults more easily than I could like some virtues. The virtues, which leave me in doubt of a woman's love, I can esteem, but that is all. Lady Leonora is

calm, serene, perfectly sweet-tempered, without jealousy and without suspicion; in one word, without love. If she loved me, she never could have been the wife she has been for some months past. You will laugh at my being angry with a wife for not being jealous. But so it is. Certain defects of temper I could bear, if I considered them as symptoms of strong affection. When I for a moment believed that Leonora suffered, when I attributed her fainting at our fête champêtre to jealousy, I was so much alarmed and touched, that I absolutely forgot her rival. I did more; to prevent her feeling uneasiness, to destroy the suspicions which I imagined had been awakened in her mind, I hesitated not to sacrifice all the pleasure and all the vanity which a man of my age might reasonably be supposed to feel in the prospect of a new and not inglorious conquest; I left home immediately, and went to meet you, my dear friend, on your return from abroad. This visit I do not set down to your account, but to that of honour, foolish, unnecessary honour. You half-persuaded me, that your hear-say Parisian evidence was more to be trusted than my own judgment, and I returned home with the resolution not to be the dupe of a coquette. Leonora's reception of me was delightful; I never saw her in such spirits, or so amiable. But I could not help wishing to ascertain whether I had attributed her fainting to the real cause. This proof I tempted to my cost. Instead of showing any tender alarm at the renewal of my obvious attentions to her rival, she was perfectly calm and collected, went on with her usual occupations, fulfilled all her duties, never reproached me by word or look, never for one moment betrayed impatience, ill-humour, suspicion, or jealousy; in short I found that I had been fool enough to attribute to excess of affection an accident which proceeded merely from the situation of her health. If anxiety of mind had been the cause of her fainting at the fête champêtre, she would since have felt and shown agitation on a thousand occasions, where she has been perfectly tranquil. Her friend Mrs. C——, who returned here a few days ago, seems to imagine that Leonora looks ill; but I shall not again be led to mistake bodily indisposition for mental suffering. Leonora's conduct argues great insensibility of soul, or great command; great insensibility, I think: for I cannot imagine such command of temper possible to any but a woman who feels indifference for the offender. Yet, even now that I have steeled myself with this conviction, I am scarcely bold enough to hazard the chance of giving her pain. Absurd weakness! It has been clearly proved to my understanding, that my irresolution, my scruples of conscience, my combats between love and esteem, are more likely to betray the real state of my mind than any decision that I could make. I de-

cide, then—I determine to be happy with a woman who has a soul capable of feeling, not merely what is called conjugal affection, but the passion of love; who is capable of sacrificing every thing to love; who has given me proofs of candour and greatness of mind, which I value far above all her wit, grace and beauty. My dear General, I know all that you can tell, all that you can hint concerning her history abroad. I know it from her own lips. It was told to me in a manner that made her my admiration. It was told to me as preservative against the danger of loving her. It was told to me with the generous design of protecting Leonora's happiness; and all this at the moment when I was beloved, tenderly beloved. She is above dissimulation: she scorns the arts, the fears of her sex. She knows you are her enemy, and yet she esteems you; she urged me to speak to you with the utmost openness: "Let me never," said she, "be the cause of your feeling less confidence or less affection for the best of friends."

R*** is sacrificed to me; that R***, with whose cursed name you tormented me. My dear friend, she will force your admiration, as she has won my love.

Yours sincerely, F. L——.

LETTER XLIII. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

Dec. 20th, ——.

As I am not trusted with the secret, I may, my dear Margaret, use my own eyes and ears as I please to find it out; and I know Leonora's countenance so well, that I see every thing that passes in her mind just as clearly as if she had told it to me in words.

It grieves me more than I can express to see her suffering as she does. I am now convinced that she has reason to be unhappy; and, what is worse, I do not see what course she can follow to recover her happiness. All her forbearance, all her patience, all her sweet temper, I perceive are useless, or worse than useless, injurious to her in her strange husband's opinion. I never liked him thoroughly, and now I detest him. He thinks her cold, insensible! She insensible!—Brute! Idiot! Every thing that she says or does displeases him. The merest trifles excite the most cruel suspicions. He totally misunderstands her character, and sees every thing about her in a false light. In short, he is under the dominion of an artful fiend, who works as she pleases upon his passions; upon his pride, which is his ruling passion.

This evening Lady Olivia began confessing that she had too much sensibility, that she was of an excessively susceptible temper, and that she should be terribly jealous of the affections of any person she loved. She did not know how love *could* exist without jealousy. Mr. L—— was present, and listening eagerly. Leonora's lips were silent; not so her countenance. I was in hopes Mr. L—— would have remarked its beautiful touching expression; but his eyes were fixed upon Olivia. I could have . . . . . but let me go on. Lady Olivia had the malice suddenly to appeal to Leonora, and asked, whether she was never jealous of her husband? Leonora, astonished by her assurance, paused for an instant, and then replied, "It would be difficult to convince me that I had any reason to be jealous of Mr. L——, I esteem him so much."—"I wish to Heaven!" exclaimed Lady Olivia, her eyes turned upwards with a fine St. Cecilia expression, whilst Mr. L——'s attention was fixed upon her, "Would to Heaven I was blessed with such a *reasonable* temper!"—"When you are wishing to Heaven, Lady Olivia," said I, "had not you better ask for *all you want* at once; not only such a reasonable temper, but such a feeling heart?"

Some of the company smiled. Lady Olivia, practised as she is, looked disconcerted; Mr. L—— grave and impenetrable; Leonora, blushing, turned away to the piano forte. Mr. L—— remained talking with Lady Olivia, and he neither saw nor heard her. If Leonora had sung like an angel it would have made no impression. She turned over the leaves of her music quickly, to a lively air, and played it immediately, to prevent my perceiving how much she felt. Poor Leonora! you are but a bad dissembler, and it is in vain to try to conceal yourself from me.

I was so sorry for Leonora, I was so incensed with Olivia this night, that I could not restrain myself, and I made matters worse. At supper I came almost to open war with her ladyship. I cannot remember exactly what I said, but I know that I threw out the most severe inuendoes which politeness could permit: and what *was* the consequence? Mr. L—— pitied Olivia and hated me; Leonora was in misery the whole time; and her husband probably thought that she was the instigator, though she was perfectly innocent. My dear Margaret, where will all this end? and how much more mischief shall I do with the best intentions possible?

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XLIV. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

Dec. 23d, —.

Your letter has travelled after me God knows where, my dear L——, and has caught me at last with my foot in the stirrup. I have just had time to look it over. I find, in short, that you are in love. I give you joy! But be in love like a madman, not like a fool. Call a demirep an angel and welcome; but remember that such angels are to be had any day in the year; and such a wife as yours is not to be had for the mines of Golconda. Coin your heart, and drop your blood for it, and you will never be loved by any other woman so well as you are by Lady Leonora L——.

As to your jealous hypochondriacism, more of that when I have more leisure. In the mean time I wish it well cured.

I am, my dear friend, yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XLV. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Jan. 7, —.

I TRIUMPH! dear Gabrielle, give me joy! Never was triumph more complete. L—— loves me! That I knew long ago; but I have at last forced from his proud heart the avowal of his passion. Love and Olivia are victorious over scruples, prejudice, pride and superstition!

Leonora feels not—sees not: she requires, she excites no pity. Long may her delusion last! But even were it this moment to dissipate, what cause have I for remorse? "Who is most to blame, he who ceases to love, or she who ceases to please?" Leonora perhaps thinks that she loves her husband; and no doubt she does so in a conjugal sort of a way: he *has* loved his wife; but be it mine to prove that his heart is suited to far other raptures; and if Olivia be called upon for sacrifices, *Olivia* can make them.

> "Let wealth, let honour wait the wedded dame,
> August her deed, and sacred be her fame;
> Before true passion all those views remove,
> Fame, wealth and honour, what are you to love?"

These lines, though quoted perpetually by the tender and passionate, can never become stale and vulgar; they will always recur in certain situations to persons of delicate sensibility, for they at once express all that can be said, and justify all that can be felt. My amiable Gabrielle, adieu. Pardon me if to-day I have no soul even for friendship. This day is all for love. OLIVIA.

LETTER XLVI. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

Jan. 4th, ——.

VHAT the devil would you have of your wife, my dear — ? You would be loved above all earthly considera- s; honour, duty, virtue and religion inclusive, would you? you would have a wife with her head in the clouds, ld you? I wish you were married to one of the all-for- heroines, who would treat you with bowl and dagger ev- day of your life. In your opinion sensibility covers a itude of faults; you would have said *sins:* so it had need, t produces a multitude. Pray what brings hundreds and sands of women to the Piazzas of Covent Garden but ibility? What does the Colonel's, and the Captain's, and Ensign's mistress talk of but *sensibility?* And are you, lear friend, to be duped by this hacknied word? And ld you really think it an indisputable proof of a lady's that she would jump out of a two pair of stairs window your arms? Now I should think myself sure of such a an's love only just whilst I held her in my arms, and cely then; for I, who in my own way am jealous as well ourself, should in this case be jealous of wickedness, and ld strongly suspect, that she would love the first devil that aw better than me.

ou are always raving about sacrifices. Your Cupid must very vindictive little god; never satisfied with the peace ings of his votaries. Mine is a good-humoured, rosy lit- llow, who desires no better than to see me laugh and be y. But to every man his own Cupid. If you cannot ve in love without sacrifices, you must have them to be And now, in sober sadness, what do you think your ine would sacrifice for you? Her reputation? that, par- me, is out of her power. Her virtue? I have no doubt vould. But before I can estimate the value of this sacri- I must know whether she makes it to you or to her pleas- Would she give up in any instance her pleasure for happiness? This is not an easy matter to ascertain with ct to a mistress: but your wife has put it beyond a t, that she prefers your happiness not only to her pleas- but to her pride, and to every thing that the sex usually r to a husband. You have been wounded by a poison- row; but you have a faithful wife who can extract the n from the wound. Lady Leonora's affection is not a fit of goodness and generosity, such as I have seen in women, but it is a steadiness of attachment in the hour al, which I have seen in few. For several months past ave, by your own account, put her temper and her love most severe tests, yet she has never failed for one mo-

ment, never reproach you by word or look.—But may be she has no feeling.—No feeling! You can have no feeling if you say so: no penetration if you think so. Would not you think me a tyrant if I put a poor fellow on the picket, and told you, when he bore it without a groan, that it was because he could not feel? You do worse, you torture the soul of the woman who loves you; she endures, she is calm, she smiles upon you even in agony; and you tell me she cannot feel! she cannot feel like an Olivia! No; and so much the better for her husband, for she will then have only feeling enough for him, she will not extend her charity to all his sex. But Olivia has such candour and magnanimity, that I must admire her! I humbly thank her for offering to make me her confidant, for offering to tell me what I know already, and what she is certain that I know. These were good moves, but I understand the game as well as her ladyship does. As to her making a friend of me; if she means an enemy to Lady Leonora L——, I would sooner see her—in Heaven: but if she would do me the favour to think no more of your heart, which is too good for her, and to accept of my ..... my ..... what shall I say? ..... my devoirs, I am at her command. She shall drive my curricle, &c. &c. She would suit me vastly well for a month or two, and by that time poor R*** would make his appearance, or somebody in his stead: at the worst, I should have a chance of some blessed metaphysical quirk, which would prove that inconstancy was a virtue, or that a new love is better than an old one. When it came to that, I should make my best bow, put on my most disconsolate face, and retire.

You will read all this in a very different spirit from that in which it is written. If you are angry—no matter: I am cool. I tell you beforehand that I will not fight you for any thing I have said in this letter, or that I ever may say about your Olivia. Therefore, my dear L——, save yourself the trouble of challenging me. I thank God I have reputation enough to be able to dispense with the glory of blowing out your brains.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XLVII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Jan. 7, ——.

We have been very gay here this last fortnight: the gallant and accomplished Prince —— has been here. H****, the witty H****, who is his favourite companion, introduced him, and he seems so much charmed with the old castle, its

towers and battlements, and with its *cynosure*, that I know not when he will be able to prevail upon himself to depart. To-morrow, he says; but so he has said these ten days: he cannot resist the entreaties of his kind host and hostess to stay another day. The soft accent of the beautiful Leonora will certainly detain him *one day more*, and her gracious smile will bereave him of rest for months to come. He has evidently fallen desperately in love with her. Now we shall see virtue in danger.

I have always been of opinion with St. Evremond and Ninon de l'Enclos, that no female virtue can stand every species of test; fortunately it is not always exposed to trial. Reputation may be preserved by certain persons in certain situations, upon very easy terms. Leonora, for instance, is armed so strong in character, that no common mortal will venture to attack her. It would be presumption little short of high treason, to imagine the fall of the Lady Leonora L——, daughter of the Duchess of ***, who, with a long line of immaculate baronesses in their own right, each in her armour of stiff stays, stands frowning defiance upon the adventurous knights. More alarming still to the modern seducer appears a judge in his long wig, and a jury with their long faces, ready to bring in their verdict, and to award damages proportionate to the rank and fortune of the parties. Then the former reputation of the lady is talked of, and the irreparable injury sustained by the disconsolate husband from the loss of the solace and affection of this paragon of wives. And it is proved that she lived in the most perfect harmony with him till the vile seducer appeared; who, in aggravation of damages, was a confidential friend of the husband's, &c. &c. &c. &c.

Brave, indeed, and desperately in love must be the man, who could dare all these to deserve the fair. But princes are, it is said, naturally brave, and ambitious of conquering difficulties.———

I have insinuated these reflections in a general way to L——, who applies them so as to plague himself sufficiently. Heaven is my witness, that I mean no injury to Lady Leonora; yet I fear that there are moments, when my respect for her superiority, joined to the consciousness of my own weakness, overpowers me, and I almost envy her the right she retains to the esteem of the man I love. This is a blameable weakness—I know it—I reproach myself bitterly; but all I can do is to confess it candidly. L—— sees my conflicts, and knows how to value the sensibility of my fond heart. Adieu, my Gabrielle. When shall I be happy? since even love has its torments, and I am thus doomed to be ever a victim to the tenderness of my soul. OLIVIA.

LETTER XLVIII. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

Jan. 8, ——.

I DO not know whether I pity, love, or admire Leonora most. Just when her mind was deeply wounded by her husband's neglect, and when her jealousy was worked to the highest pitch by his passion for her dangerous rival, the Prince —— arrives here, and, struck by Leonora's charms of mind and person, falls passionately in love with her. Probably his Highness's friend H—— had given him a hint of the existing circumstances, and he thought a more propitious moment could scarcely be found for making an impression upon a female mind. He judged of Leonora by other women. And I, like a simpleton, judged of her by myself. With shame I confess to you, my dear Margaret, that notwithstanding all my past experience, I did expect that she would have done as I am afraid I should have done in her situation. I think that I could not have resisted the temptation of coquetting a little . . . . . a very little . . . . . just to revive the passion of the man whom I really loved. This expedient succeeds so often with that wise sex, who never rightly know the value of a heart, except when they have just won it, or at the moment when they are on the point of losing it. In Leonora's place, and in such an emergency, I should certainly have employed that frightful monster jealousy to waken sleeping love; since he, and only he, can do it expeditiously and effectually. This I have hinted to Leonora, talking always *in generals;* for, since my total overthrow, I have never dared to come to particulars: but by putting cases and *confessing myself*, I contrived to make my thoughts understood. I then boasted of the extreme facility of the means I would adopt to recover a heart. Leonora answered in the words of a celebrated great man:—

"C'est facile de se servir de pareils moyens; c'est difficile de s'y résoudre."

"But if no other means would succeed," said I, "would not you sacrifice your pride to your love?"

"My pride, willingly; but not my sense of what is right," said she, with an indescribable mixture of tenderness and firmness in her manner.

"Can a little coquetry in a good cause be such a heinous offence?" persisted I. I knew that I was wrong all the time; but I delighted in seeing how right she was.

No—she would not allow her mind to be cheated by female sophistry; nor yet by the male casuistry of, "The end sanctifies the means."

"If you had the misfortune to lose the affections of the man you love, and if you were quite certain of regaining them by following my recipe?" said I.

Never shall I forget the look with which Leonora left me, and the accent with which she said, "My dear Helen, if it were ever to be my misfortune to lose my husband's love, I would not, even if I were certain of success, attempt to regain it by any unworthy arts. How could I wish to regain his love at the hazard of losing his esteem, and the certainty of forfeiting my own!"

I said no more—I had nothing more to say: I saw that I had given pain, and I have never touched upon the subject since. But her practice is even beyond her theory. Never, by deed, or look, or word, or thought, (for I see all her thoughts in her eloquent countenance) has she swerved from her principles. No prudery—no coquetry—no mock-humility—no triumph. Never for an instant did she, by a proud air, say to her husband—See what others think of me! Never did a resentful look say to him—Inconstant!—revenge is in my power! Never even did a reproachful sigh express—I am injured, yet I do not retaliate.

Mr. L—— is blind; he is infatuated; he is absolutely bereaved of judgment by a perfidious, ungrateful and cruel wretch. Let me vent my indignation to you, dear Margaret, or it will explode, perhaps, when it may do Leonora mischief.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XLIX. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Jan. 9, ——.

"Princes et Rois vont vîtes en amour."

YET Lady Leonora, in her simplicity, never dreamed of love till the Prince's passion was too visible and audible to be misunderstood. And then, she changed her tone, and checked her simplicity, and was so reserved, and so dignified, and so *proper*, it was quite edifying, especially to a poor sinner of a coquette like me; nothing *piquante;* nothing *agaçante;* nothing *demi-voilée;* no retiring to be pursued; not a single manœuvre of coquetry did she practise. This convinces me that she cares not in the least for her husband; because, if she really loved him, and wished to reclaim his heart, what so natural or so simple as to excite his jealousy, and thus revive his love? After neglecting this golden opportunity, she can never convince me that she is really anxious about her husband's heart. This I hinted to L——, and his own susceptibility had hinted it to him efficaciously before I spoke.

Though Leonora has been so correct hitherto, and so cold to the Prince in her husband's presence, I have my suspicions that if in his absence proper means were taken, if her pride

were roused by apt suggestions, if it were delicately pointed out to her that she is shamefully neglected, that she is a cipher in her own house, that her husband presumes too much upon her sweetness of temper, that his inconstancy is wondered at by all who have eyes, and that a little retaliation might become her ladyship, I would not answer for her forbearance; that is to say, if all this were done by a dexterous man, a lover, and a prince! I shall take care my opinions shall be known; for I cannot endure to have the esteem of the man I love monopolized. Exposed to temptation as I have been, and with as ardent affections, Leonora, or I am much mistaken, would not have been more estimable. Adieu, my dearest Gabrielle. Nous verrons!—Nous verrons! OLIVIA.

Sunday Evening.

P. S. I open my letter to tell you that the Prince is actually gone. Doubtless he will return at a more auspicious moment.

Lady M—— and all the troop of friends are to depart on Monday; all but *the* bosom friend, *l'amie intime*, that insupportable Helen, who is ever at daggers drawing with me. So much the better! L—— sees her cabals with his wife; she is a partizan without the art to be so to any purpose, and her manœuvres tend only to increase his partiality for his Olivia.

LETTER L. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Jan. 12, ——.

* * * * * * * * *

* * * In short, Leonora has discovered all that she might have seen months ago between her husband and me. What will be the consequence? I long, yet almost fear to meet her again. She is now in her own apartment, writing, I presume, to her mother for advice. OLIVIA.

LETTER LI. LEONORA TO OLIVIA.

[Left on Lady Olivia's Dressing-table.]

Jan. 12, ——.

O you, whom no kindness can touch, whom no honour can bind, whom no faith can hold, enjoy the torments you have inflicted on me! enjoy the triumph of having betrayed a confiding friend! Friend no more—affect, presume no longer to call me friend! I am under no necessity to dissemble, and dissimulation is foreign to my habits, and abhorrent to my

nature! I know you to be my enemy, and I say so: my most cruel enemy; one who could, without reluctance or temptation, rob me of all I hold most dear. Yes, without temptation; for you do not love my husband, Olivia. On this point I cannot be mistaken; I know too well what it is to love him. Had you been struck by his great or good and amiable qualities, charmed by his engaging manners, or seduced by the violence of his passion; and had I seen you honourably endeavour to repress that passion; had I seen in you the slightest disposition to sacrifice your pleasure or your vanity to friendship or to duty, I think I could have forgiven, I am sure I should have pitied you. But you felt no pity for me, no shame for yourself; you made no attempt to avoid, you invited the danger. Mr. L—— was not the deceiver, but the deceived. By every art and every charm in your power, and you have many, you won upon his senses and worked upon his imagination; you saw, and made it your pride to conquer the scruples of that affection he once felt for his wife, and that wife was your friend. By passing bounds, which he could not conceive that any woman could pass, except in the delirium of passion, you made him believe that your love for him exceeds all that I am capable of feeling, all that I feel. How he will find himself deceived! If you had loved him as I do, you could not so easily have forfeited all claim to his esteem. Had you loved him so much, you would have loved honour more.

It is possible that Mr. L—— may taste some pleasure with you whilst his delusion lasts, whilst his imagination paints you, as mine once did, in false colours, possessed of generous virtues, and the victim of excessive sensibility: but when he sees you such as you are, he will recoil from you with aversion, he will reject you with contempt.

Knowing my opinion of you, Lady Olivia, you will not choose to remain in this house; nor can I desire for my guest one whom I can no longer, in private or in public, make my companion. Adieu. LEONORA L——.

LETTER LII. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Jan. 12, —.
Midnight.

FAREWELL for ever!—It must be so—Farewell for ever! Would to Heaven I had summoned courage sooner to pronounce these fatal, necessary, irrevocable words. Then had I parted from you without remorse, without the obloquy to

which I am now exposed. Oh, my dearest L——! Mine, do I still dare to call you? Yes, mine for the last time, I must call you, mine I must fancy you, though for the impious thought the Furies themselves were to haunt me to madness. My dearest L——, never more must we meet in this world! Think not that my weak voice alone forbids it: no, a stronger voice than mine is heard—an injured wife reclaims you. What a letter have I just received . . . . . !—from . . . . . Leonora! She tells me that she no longer desires for her guest one whom she cannot, in public or private, make her companion.—Oh, Leonora, it was sufficient to banish me from your heart! She tells me not only that I have for ever forfeited her confidence, her esteem, her affection; but that I shall soon be your aversion and contempt. Oh cruel, cruel words! But I submit—I have deserved it all—I have robbed her of a heart above all price. Leonora, why did you not reproach me more bitterly? I desire, I implore to be crushed, to be annihilated by your vengeance! Most admirable, most virtuous, most estimable of women, best of wives, I have with sacrilegious love profaned a soul consecrated to you and conjugal virtue. I acknowledge my crime; trample upon me as you will, I am humbled in the dust. More than all your bitterest reproaches do I feel the remorse of having for a moment interrupted such serenity of happiness.

Oh, why did you persuade me, L——, and why did I believe that Leonora was calm and free from all suspicion? How could I believe that any woman, whom you had ever loved, could remain blind to your inconstancy, or feel secure indifference? Happy woman! in you to love is not a crime; you may glory in your passion, whilst I must hide mine from every human eye, drop in shameful secresy the burning tear, stifle the struggling sigh, blush at the conflicts of virtue and sensibility, and carry shame and remorse with me to the grave. Happy Leonora! happy even when most injured, you have a right to complain to him you love, he is yours—you are his wife—his esteem, his affection are yours. On Olivia he has bestowed but a transient thought, and eternal ignominy must be her portion. So let it be—so I wish it to be. Would to Heaven I may thus atone for the past, and secure your future felicity. Fly to her, my dearest L——, I conjure you! throw yourself at her feet, entreat, implore, obtain her forgiveness. She cannot refuse it to your tears, to your caresses. To withstand them she must be more or less than woman. No, she cannot resist your voice when it speaks words of peace and love; she will press you with transport to her heart, and Olivia, poor Olivia, will be for ever forgotten; yet she will

rejoice in your felicity; absolved perhaps in the eye of Heaven, though banished from your society, she will die content.

Full well am I aware of the consequences of quitting thus precipitately the house of Lady Leonora L——; but nothing that concerns myself alone can for a moment make me hesitate to do that which the sentiment of virtue dictates, and which is yet more strongly urged by regard for the happiness of one, who once allowed me to call her friend. I know my reputation is irrecoverably sacrificed: but it is to one for whom I would lay down my life. Can a woman, who feels as I do, deem any earthly good a sacrifice for him she loves? Dear L——, adieu for ever! OLIVIA.

LETTER LIII. LEONORA TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

DEAREST MOTHER, Jan. 13, —.

IT is all over—my husband is gone—gone perhaps for ever—all is in vain—all is lost!

Without saying more to you than I ought, I may tell you, that in consequence of an indignant letter which I wrote last night to Lady Olivia, she left my house this morning early, before any of the family were up. Mr. L—— heard of her departure before I did. He has, I will not say followed her, for of that I am not certain; but he has quitted home, and without giving me one kind look at parting, without even noticing a letter which I left last night upon his table. At what slight things we catch to save us from despair! How obstinate, how vain is hope! I fondly hoped, even to the last moment, that this letter, this foolish letter, would work a sudden change in my husband's heart, would operate miracles, would restore me to happiness. I fancied, absurdly fancied, that laying open my whole soul to him would have an effect upon his mind. Alas! has not my whole soul been always open to him? Could this letter tell him any thing but what he knows already or what he will never know—how well I love him! I was weak to expect so much from it; yet as it expressed without complaint the anguish of disappointed affection, it deserved at least some acknowledgment. Could not he have said, "My dear Leonora, I thank you for your letter?"—or more coldly still—"Leonora, I have received your letter." Even that would have been some relief to me: but now all is despair. I saw him just when he was going away, but for a moment; till the last instant he was not to be seen; then, in spite of all his command of countenance, I discerned strong marks of agitation; but towards me an air of resentment, more than any disposition to kinder thoughts. I fancy

that he scarcely knew what he said, nor, I am sure, did *I*. He talked, I remember, of having immediate business in town, and I endeavoured to believe him. Contrary to his usual composed manner, he was in such haste to be gone, that I was obliged to send his watch and purse after him, which he had left upon his bed. How melancholy his room looked to me! His clothes just as he had left them—a rose which Lady Olivia gave him yesterday was in water on his table. My letter was not there; so he has it, probably unread. He will read it some time or other perhaps—and some time or other, perhaps, when I am dead and gone, he will believe I loved him. Could he have known what I felt at the moment when he turned from me, he would have pitied me: for his nature, his character cannot be quite altered in a few months, though he has ceased to love Leonora. From the window of my own room I watched for the last glimpse of him—heard him call to the postillions, and bid them "drive fast—faster." This was the last sound I heard of his voice. When shall I hear that voice again? I think that I shall certainly hear from him the day after to-morrow—and I wish to-day and to-morrow were gone.

I am afraid that you will think me very weak: but, my dear mother, I have no motive for fortitude now; and perhaps it might have been better for me, if I had not exerted so much. I begin to fear that all my fortitude is mistaken for indifference. Something Mr. L—— said the other day about sensibility and sacrifices, gave me this idea. Sensibility!—It has been my hard task for some months past to repress mine, that it might not give pain or disgust. I have done all that my reason and my dearest mother counselled; surely I cannot have done wrong. How apt we are to mistake the opinion or the taste of the man we love for the rule of right! Sacrifices? What sacrifices can I make?—All that I have, is it not his?—My whole heart, is it not his?—Myself, all that I am, all that I *can* be? Have I not lived with him of late, without recalling to his mind the idea that I suffer by his neglect? Have I not left his heart at liberty, and can I make a greater sacrifice? I really do not understand what he means by sacrifices. A woman who loves her husband is part of him; whatever she does for him is for herself. I wish he would explain to me what he can mean by sacrifices—but when will he ever again explain his thoughts and feelings to me?

My dearest mother, it has been a relief to my mind to write all this to you; if there is no sense in it you will forgive, and encourage me by your affection and strength of mind, which, in all situations, have such power to soothe and support your daughter.

Lady M*** and all my friends, except my dear Helen, left me last week. The Prince ——, who spent a fortnight here, paid me particular attention. I fancied that once or twice my husband's love was awakened by jealousy; but I disdained to use any *indirection* to regain his heart. I should disdain a heart that could be so regained.

The Prince talked of soon paying us another visit. If he should, I will not receive him in Mr. L——'s absence. This may seem like vanity or prudery; but no matter what it appears, if it is right.

Well might you, my best friend, bid me beware of forming an intimacy with an unprincipled woman. I have suffered severely for neglecting your counsels; how much I have still to endure is yet to be tried: but I can never be entirely miserable whilst I possess, and whilst I hope that I deserve the affection of such a mother. LEONORA L——.

LETTER LIV. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO HER DAUGHTER.

Jan. 15, ——.

If my approbation and affection can sustain you in this trying situation, your fortitude will not forsake you, my beloved daughter; the motive is stronger now than it has ever been. Great minds rise in adversity; they are always equal to the trial, and superior to injustice: betrayed and deserted, they feel their own force, and they rely upon themselves. Be yourself, my Leonora! Persevere as you have begun, and, trust me, you will be happy. I abide by my first opinion, I repeat my prophecy—your husband's esteem, affection, love, will be permanently yours. Change of circumstances, however alarming, cannot shake the fixed judgment of my understanding. Character, as you justly observe, cannot utterly change in a few months. Your husband is deceived, he is now as one in the delirium of a fever: he will recover his senses, and see Lady Olivia and you such as you are.

You do not explain, and I take it for granted you have good reasons for not explaining to me more fully the immediate cause of your letter to Lady Olivia. I am sorry that any cause should have thrown her upon the protection of Mr. L——; for a man of honour and generosity feels himself bound to treat with tenderness a woman who appears to sacrifice every thing for his sake. Consider this in another point of view, and it will afford you subject of consolation; for it is always a consolation to good minds to think those whom they love, less to blame than they appear to be. You will be more calm and patient when you reflect, that your husband's

absence may be prolonged by a mistaken sense of honour. From the nature of his connexion with Lady Olivia it cannot last long. Had she saved appearances, and engaged him in a sentimental affair, it might have been far more dangerous to your happiness.

I entirely approve of your conduct with respect to the Prince: it is worthy of my child, and just what I should have expected from her. The artifices of coquettes, and all the *art* of love is beneath her; she has far other powers and resources, and need not strive to maintain her dignity by vengeance. I admire your magnanimity, and I still more admire your good sense; for high spirit is more common in our sex than good sense. Few know how and when they should sacrifice small considerations to great ones. You say that you will not receive the Prince in your husband's absence, though this may be attributed to prudery or vanity, &c. &c. You are quite right. How many silly women sacrifice the happiness of their lives to the idea of what women or men, as silly as themselves, will say or think of their motives. How many absurd heroines of romance, and of those who imitate them in real life, do we see, who can never act with common sense or presence of mind; if a man's carriage breaks down, or his horse is tired at the end of their avenues, or for some such ridiculous reason, they must do the very reverse of all they know to be prudent. Perpetually exposed, by a fatal concurrence of circumstances, to excite the jealousy of their lovers and husbands, they create the necessity, to which they fall a victim. I rejoice that I cannot feel any apprehension of my daughter's conducting herself like one of these novel-bred ladies.

I am sorry, my dear, that Lady M—— and your friends have left you: yet even in this there may be good. Your affairs will be made less public, and you will be less the subject of impertinent curiosity. I advise you, however, to mix as much as usual with your neighbours in the country: your presence, and the dignity of your manners, will impose silence upon idle tongues. No wife of real spirit solicits the world for compassion: she who does not court popularity, ensures respect.

Adieu, my dearest child, the time will come when your husband will feel the full merit of your fortitude; when he will know how to distinguish between true and false sensibility; between the love of an Olivia and of a Leonora.

———.

LETTER LV. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

MY DEAR MARGARET, Jan. 16, —.

I SHALL never forgive myself. I fear I have done Leonora irreparable injury; and, dear magnanimous sufferer, she has never reproached me! In a fit of indignation and imprudent zeal I made a discovery, which has produced a total breach between Leonora and Lady Olivia, and in consequence of this Mr. L—— has gone off with her Ladyship * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *. We have heard nothing from Mr. L—— since his departure, and Leonora is more unhappy than ever, and my imprudence is the cause of this. Yet she continues to love me, and treats me with so much generous kindness! She is an angel! I have promised her not to mention her affairs in future even in any of my letters to you, dear Margaret. Pray quiet any reports you may hear, and stop idle tongues.

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER LVI. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Jan. 16. —.

I DO not think I could have borne with temper from any other man breathing the last letter which I received from you. I am sensible that it was written with the best intentions for my happiness; but I must now inform you, that the lady in question has accepted of my protection, and consequently no man who esteems me can treat her with disrespect.

It is no longer a question, what she will sacrifice for me; she has shown the greatest generosity and tenderness of soul; and I should despise myself, if I did not exert every power to make her happy.—We are at Richmond; but if you write, direct to me at my house in town.

Yours sincerely, F. L——.

LETTER LVII. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

Jan. 19, ——.

DREAM your dream out, my dear L——. Since you are angry with me, as Solander was with Sir Joseph Banks for awakening him, I shall not take the liberty of shaking you any more. I believe I shook you rather too roughly: but I assure you it was for your good, as people always tell their

friends, when they do the most disagreeable things imaginable. Forgive me, and I will let you dream in peace. You will however allow me to watch by you whilst you sleep and, my dear somnambulist, I may just take care that you do not knock your head against a post, or fall into a well.

I hope you will not have any objection to my paying my respects to Lady Olivia when I come to town, which, I flatter myself, I shall be able to do shortly. The fortifications here are almost completed.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER LVIII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Richmond, Jan. 23, ——.

HAPPY!—No, my dear Gabrielle, nor shall I ever be happy, whilst I have not exclusive possession of the heart of the man I love. I have sacrificed every thing to him; I have a right to expect, that he should sacrifice at least a wife for me—a wife whom he only esteems. But L—— has not sufficient strength of mind to liberate himself from the cobwebs which restrain those who talk of conscience, and who, in fact, are only superstitious. I see with indignation, that his soul is continually struggling between passion for me and a something, I know not what to call it, that he feels for this wife. His thoughts are turning towards home. I believe that to an Englishman's ears there is some magic in the words *home* and *wife*. I used to think foreigners ridiculous for associating the ideas of Milord Anglois with roast beef and pudding; but I begin to see that they are quite right, and that an Englishman has a certain set of inveterate *homely* prejudices, which are necessary to his well-being, and almost to his existence. You may entice him into the land of sentiment, and for a time keep him there: but refine and polish and enlighten him as you will, he recurs to his own plain sense, as he terms it, on the first convenient opportunity. In short, it is lost labour to civilize him, for sooner or later he will *hottentot* again. Pray introduce that term, Gabrielle—*you* can translate it. For my part I can introduce nothing here; my manière d'être is really insupportable; my talents are lost; I, who am accustomed to shine in society, see nobody; I might, as Josephine every day observes, as well be buried alive. Retirement and love are charming; but then it must be perfect love—not the equivocating sort that L—— feels for me, which keeps the word of promise only to the ear. I bear every sort of désagrément for him; I make myself a figure for the finger of scorn to point at, and he insults me with esteem for a wife.

Can you conceive this, my amiable Gabrielle?—No, there are ridiculous points in the characters of my countrymen, which you will never be able to comprehend. And what is still more incomprehensible, it is my fate to love this man; yes, passionately to love him!—But he must give me proof of reciprocal passion. I have too much spirit to sacrifice every thing for him, who will sacrifice nothing for me. Besides, I have another motive. To you, my faithful Gabrielle, I open my whole heart.—Pride inspires me as well as love. I am resolved that Leonora, the haughty Leonora, shall live to repent of having insulted and exasperated Olivia. In some situations, contempt can be answered only by vengeance; and when the malice of a contracted and illiberal mind provokes it, revenge is virtue. Leonora has called me her enemy, and consequently has made me such. 'Tis she has declared the war! 'tis for me to decide the victory!

L——, I know, has the offer of an embassy to Petersburgh. —He shall accept it.—I will accompany him thither. Lady Leonora may, in his absence, console herself with her august counsellor and mother:—that proudest of earthly paragons is yet to be taught the extent of Olivia's power. Adieu, my charming Gabrielle! I will carry your tenderest remembrances to our brilliant Russian Princess. She has often invited me, you know, to pay her a visit, and this will be the ostensible object of my journey. A horrible journey to be sure!!! —But what will not love undertake and accomplish, especially when goaded by pride, and inspirited by great revenge?

OLIVIA.

LETTER LIX. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

Jan. 23, ——.

THOUGH I am forbidden to speak of Leonora's affairs, I may mention her health; but not to herself, for she insists upon it that she is perfectly well, while I see that her body is sustained only by her mind—by that mind which I never saw equalled in fortitude, tenderness and magnanimity.

I cannot express what I feel at seeing so excellent, so dear a friend suffer, without having the power to afford her the least assistance. In all my misfortunes she was my support, my never-failing consolation; but I can do nothing for her but love her, and that I do with my whole soul. She is a most amiable creature, and her husband deserves..... but that I must not say. Adieu, then.

Your affectionate HELEN C——.

LETTER LX. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Jan. 25, —.

VICTIM to the delusions of passion, too well I know my danger, and now, even now foresee my miserable fate. Too well I know, that the delicious poison which spreads through my frame, exalts, entrances, but to destroy. Too well I know that the meteor fire, which shines so bright on my path, entices me forward but to plunge me in the depths of infamy. The long warnings of recorded time teach me, that perjured man triumphs, disdains and abandons. Too well, alas! I know these fatal truths; too well I feel my approaching doom. Yet, infatuated as I am, prescience avails not, the voice of prudence warns, the hand of Heaven beckons me in vain.

My friend! my more than friend, my lover! beloved beyond expression! you to whom I immolate myself, you for whom I sacrifice more than life, O whisper words of peace! for you, and you alone, can tranquillize this agitated bosom. Assure me, L——, if with truth you can assure me, that I have no rival in your affections. O tell me that the name of wife does not invalidate the claims of love! Repeat to me, a thousand times repeat, that I am sole possessor of your heart!

The moment you quit me I am overpowered with melancholy forebodings. Scarcely are you out of my sight, before I dread that I should never see you more, or that some fatality should deprive me of your love. When shall the sails of love waft us from this dangerous shore? O! when shall I dare to call you mine? Heavens! how many things may intervene . . . . . Let nothing detain you from Richmond this evening: but come not at all—come no more, unless to re-assure my trembling heart, and to convince me that love and Olivia have banished every other image. OLIVIA.

LETTER LXI. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR GENERAL, Jan. 26, —.

I AM come to a resolution to accept of that embassy to Russia which I lately refused. My mind has been in such constant anxiety for some time past, that my health has suffered, and change of air and place are necessary to me. You will say, that the climate of Russia is a strange choice for an invalid: I could indeed have wished for a milder; but in this world we must be content with the least of two evils. I wish to have some ostensible reason for going abroad, and this embassy is the only one that presents itself in an unquestionable

shape. Any thing is better than staying where I am, and *as* I am. My motives are not so entirely personal and selfish as I have stated them. A man who has a grain of feeling cannot endure to see the woman whom he loves, whose only failing is her love, living in a state of dereliction, exposed to the silent scorn of her equals and inferiors, if not to open insult. All her fine talents, every advantage of nature and education, sacrificed, and her sensibility to shame a perpetual source of misery. A man must be a brute if he do not feel for a woman whose affection for him has reduced her to this situation. My delicacy as to female manners, and the high value I set upon public opinion in all that concerns the sex, make me peculiarly susceptible and wretched in my present circumstances. To raise the drooping spirits, and support the self-approbation of a woman, who is conscious that she has forfeited her claim to respect—to make love supply the place of all she has sacrificed to love, is a difficult and exquisitely painful task. My feelings render hers more acute, and the very precautions which I take, however delicate, alarm and wound her pride, by reminding her of all she wishes to forget. In this country no woman, who is not lost to shame, can bear to live without reputation.———I pass over a great many intermediate ideas, my dear General; your sense and feeling will supply them. You see the expediency, the necessity of my accepting this embassy. Olivia urges, how can I refuse it? She wishes to accompany me. She made this offer with such decision of spirit, with such passionate tenderness, as touched me to the very soul. A woman, who really loves, absolutely devotes herself, and becomes insensible to every difficulty and danger; to her all parts of the world are alike; all she fears is to be separated from the object of her affections.

Leonora never loved me as Olivia does. But Lady Leonara is a most respectable, amiable woman, and no man can be more conscious than I am of her full merit. She has all the virtues in their due proportion. But the very excess of certain passions proves them to be genuine. Even whilst we blame the rashness of those who act from the enthusiasm of their natures, whilst we foresee all the perils to which they seem blind, we tremble at their danger, we grow more and more interested for them every moment, we admire their courage, we long to snatch them from their fate, we are irresistibly hurried along with them down the precipice.

But why do I say all this to you, my dear General? To no man upon earth could it be more ineffectually addressed. Let me see you however before we leave England. It would be painful to me to quit this country without taking leave of you, notwithstanding all that you have lately done to thwart my inclinations, and notwithstanding all I may expect you to

say when we meet. Probably I shall be detained here some weeks, as I must wait for instructions from our court. I write this day to Lady Leonora, to inform her that I am appointed ambassador to Russia. She shall have all the honours of war; she shall be treated with all the respect to which she is so well entitled. I suppose she will wish to reside with her mother during my absence. She cannot do better: she will then be in the most eligible situation, and I shall be relieved from all anxiety upon her account. She will be perfectly happy with her mother. I have often thought, that she was much happier before she married me than she has been since our union.

I have some curiosity to know whether she will see the Prince when I am gone. Do not mistake me, I am not jealous: I have too little love, and too much esteem for Leonora, to feel the slightest jealousy. I have no doubt, that if I were to stay in Russia for ten years, and if all the princes and potentates in Europe were to be at her feet, my wife would conduct herself with the most edifying propriety: but I am a little curious to know how far vanity or pride can console a virtuous woman for the absence of love.

Yours truly, F. L.

LETTER LXII. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Paris.

You are really decided then to go to Russia, my amiable friend, and you will absolutely undertake this horrible voyage! And you are not intimidated by the idea of the immense distance between Petersburgh and Paris! Alas! I had hoped soon to see you again. The journey from my convent to Paris was the longest and most formidable that I ever undertook, and at this moment it appears to me terrible; you may conceive therefore my admiration of your courage and strength of mind, my dear Olivia, who are going to brave the ocean, turning your back on Paris, and every moment receding from our polished centre of attraction, to perish perhaps among mountains of ice. Mon Dieu! it makes me shudder to think of it. But if it pleases Heaven that you should once arrive at Petersburgh, you will crown your tresses with diamonds, you will envelope yourself with those superb furs of the north, and smiling at all the dangers you have passed, you will be yourself a thousand times more dangerous than they. You, who have lived so long at Paris, who speak our

language in all its shades of elegance ; you, who have divined all our secrets of pleasing, who have caught our very air :

" Et la grâce, encore plus belle que la beauté."

You, who are absolutely a French woman, and a Parisian, what a sensation you will produce at Petersburgh !—Quels succès vous attendent !—Quels hommages !

You will have the goodness to offer my tenderest sentiments, and the assurances of my perfect respect, to our dear Princess : you will also find the proper moment to remind her of the promise she made to send me specimens of the fine ermines and sables of her country. For my part, I used to be, I confess, in a great error with respect to furs ; I always acknowledged them to be rich, but avoided them as heavy ; I considered them as fitter for the stiff magnificence of an empress of all the Russias, than for the light elegance of a Parisian beauty ; but our charming Princess convinced me that this is a heresy in taste. When I beheld the grace with which she wore her ermine, and the art with which she knew how to vary its serpent folds as she moved, or as she spoke, the variety it gave to her costume and attitudes ; the developement it afforded to a fine hand and arm, the resource in the pauses of conversation, and that soft and attractive air which it seemed to impart even to the play of her wit, I could no longer refuse my homage to ermine. Such is the despotism of beauty over all the objects of taste and fashion ; and so it is, that a woman of sense, address and sentiment, let her be born or thrown by fate where she may, will always know how to avail herself of every possible advantage of nature and art. Nothing will be too trifling or too vast for her genius.

I must make you understand me, my dear Olivia ; your Gabrielle is not so frivolous as simpletons imagine. Frivolity is an excellent, because an unsuspected mask, under which serious and important designs may be safely concealed. I would explain myself further, but must now go to the opera to see the new ballet. Let me know, my interesting, my sublime Olivia, when you are positively determined on your voyage to Petersburgh ; and then you shall become acquainted with your friend as a politician. Her friendship for you will not be confined to a mere intercourse of sentiment, but will, if you have courage to second her views, give you a secret yet decisive weight and consequence, of which you have hitherto never dreamed.—Adieu.—These gentlemen are so impatient, I must go. Burn the last page of this letter, and the whole of my next as soon as you have read it, I conjure you my dear. GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER LXIII. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

DEAR L——, Jan. 29, —.

I HAVE time but to write one line to satisfy that philosophical curiosity, which, according to your injunctions, I will not denominate jealousy—except when I talk to myself.

You have a philosophical curiosity to know whether your wife will see the Prince in your absence. I saw his favourite yesterday, who complained to me, that his Highness had been absolutely refused admittance at your castle, notwithstanding he had made many ingenious and some bold attempts to see Lady Leonora L—— in the absence of her faithless husband.

As to your scheme of going to Russia, you will be obliged, luckily, to wait for some time for instructions, and in the interval it is to be hoped, you will recover your senses. I shall see you as soon as possible.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER LXIV. LADY LEONORA L——'S WOMAN TO MR. L——'S SWISS.

DEAR MONS. DE VAUD, Jan. 29, —.

I HAVE received all your letters, and thank you for writing so often, and inquiring after my dear lady, and did expect no less from your good heart. I have no account to give you of her that can be pleasing. None but those that know my Lady as well as I do could guess how much she grieves inwardly; for she keeps it all to herself: but I know that she does not sleep o'nights, and her fine spirits are gone, and her colour faded, except at times when she expects news from my master. With all this she is as gentle and sweet tempered as ever, and she has as much thought and feeling as ever, even for the meanest creature about the place. She has clothed from head to foot the children of the poor woman you and I found lying, as we crossed the common that cold day, with a stone for her pillow. And my lady has had the old widow Clift's cottage new thatched; also she often goes to see your father, and stands speaking so kindly to him as he sits on the bench before his door, that, as he says, his spirits are raised for an hour after. A wicked heart that must be that could be ungrateful to my lady. But of that I say no more. Last night, as I was undressing of my lady, "Susan," says she, with her sweet tone of voice that goes to one's soul—"Susan, you are sorry, I believe, that de Vaud is gone with your master." "A little I am, my lady," said I; "but most of all I

wish, if it pleased God, that my master would come home again." My lady gave a sigh, but said nothing, and I was sorry I had said so much; but out of respect could not seem to notice her thoughts, so kept folding up her gown at the farthest end of the room, that she might not see I was crying. But I will think the best, and still I have a great hope that things will turn out right at last. The children are all well, and the little one growing every day liker to my master, and and my lady every day fonder of him. I hope this next will be a boy, and who knows but his father may be home to see him. Write and say if there be any good news, or likelihood of any; and this is not only my desire, but the prayer of all in this house.

I am your constant SUSAN MASON.

LETTER LXV. MADAME DE P—— TO LADY OLIVIA.

Paris.

As our vanity always endeavours to establish a balance between our own perfections and those of our friends, I must flatter myself, my dear Olivia, that in compensation for that courage and ardent imagination in which you are so much my superior, I possess some little advantages over you in my scientific, hereditary knowledge of court intrigue, and of the arts of representation; all which will be necessary to you in your character of embassadress: you will in fact deserve this title, for of course you will govern the English embassador, whom you honour with your love. And of course you will appear with splendour, and you will be particularly careful to have your *traineau* well appointed. Pray remember that one of your horses must gallop, whilst the other trots, or you are nobody. It will also be absolutely necessary to have a numerous retinue of servants, because this suits the Russian idea of magnificence. You must have, as the Russian nobles always had in Paris, four servants constantly to attend your equipage; one to carry the flambeau, another to open the door, and a couple to carry you into and out of your carriage. I beseech you to bear in mind perpetually, that you are to be as helpless as possible. A Frenchman of my acquaintance, who spent nine years in Russia, told me, that in his first setting out at Petersburgh, he was put on his guard in this particular by a speech of his Russian valet de chambre: —" Sir, the Englishman you visited to-day cannot be worthy of your acquaintance; he cannot be a gentleman. Son valet me dit qu'il se déshabille seul!!!"

I suppose you take Josephine with you; she will be an inestimable treasure: and I shall make it my business to send you the first advices of Paris fashions, which her talents will not fail to comprehend and execute. My charming Olivia! you will be the model of taste and elegance! Do not suspect that dress is carrying me away from politics. I assure you I know what I am about, and am going straight to my object. The art of attending to trifles is the art of governing the world, as all historians know, who have gone to the bottom of affairs. Was not the face of Europe changed by a dish of tea thrown on Mrs. Masham's gown, as Voltaire with penetrating genius remarks? Women, without a doubt, understand the importance of trifles better than men do, and consequently always move in secret the slight springs of that vast machine, the civilized world. Is not your ambition roused, my Olivia? You must however lay aside a little of your romance, and not approach the political machine whilst you are intoxicated with love, else you will blunder infallibly, and do infinite and irreparable mischief to yourself and your friends.

Permit me to tell you, that you have been a little spoiled by sentimental novels, which are good only to talk of, when one must show sensibility, but destructive as rules of action. By the false lights which these writers, who know nothing of the world, have thrown upon objects, you have been deluded; you have been led to mistake the means for the end. Love has been with you the sole end of love; whereas it ought to be the beginning of power. No matter for the past: the future is yours: at our age this future must be dexterously managed. A woman of spirit, and, what is better, of sense, must always take care that in her heart the age of love is not prolonged beyond the age of being beloved. In these times a woman has no choice at a certain period but politics, or bel esprit; for devotion, which used to be a resource, is no longer in fashion. We must all take a part, my dear; I assure you I have taken mine decidedly, and I predict that you will take yours with brilliant success. How often must one cry in the ears of lovers—Love must die! must die! must die! But you, my dear Olivia, will not be deaf to the warning voice of common sense. Your own experience has on former occasions convinced you, that passion cannot be eternal; and at present, if I mistake not, there is in your love a certain mixture of other feelings, a certain alloy, which will make it happily ductile and manageable. When your triumph over the wife is complete, passion for the husband will insensibly decay; and this will be fortunate for you, because assuredly your embassador would not choose to remain all the rest of his days in love and in exile at Petersburgh. All these English are afflicted with

the maladie du pays; and, as you observe so well, the words home and wife have ridiculous but unconquerable power over their minds. What will become of you, my dear Olivia, when this Mr. L—— chooses to return to England to his castle, &c.? You could not accompany him. You must provide in time against this catastrophe, or you will be a deserted, disgraced, undone woman, my dear friend.

No one should begin to act a romance, who has not well considered the dénouement. It is a charming thing to mount with a friend in a balloon, amid crowds of spectators, who admire the fine spectacle, and applaud the courage of the aërostats; the losing sight of this earth, and the being in or above the clouds, must also be delightful: but the moment will come when the travellers descend, and then begins the danger; then they differ about throwing out the ballast, the balloon is rent in the quarrel, it sinks with frightful rapidity, and they run the hazard, like the poor Marquis d'Arlande, of being spitted upon the spire of the Invalids, or of being entangled among woods and briars—at last alighting upon the earth, our adventurers, fatigued and bruised, and disappointed, come out of their shattered triumphal car, exposed to the derision of the changeable multitude.

Every thing is this world in judged of by success. Your voyage to Petersburgh, my dear Olivia, must not be a mere adventure of romance; as a party of pleasure it would be ridiculous; we must make something more of it. Inclosed is a letter to a Russian nobleman, an old lover of mine, who I understand is in favour. He will certainly be at your command. He is a man possessed by the desire of having reputation among foreigners, vain of the preference of our sex, generous even to prodigality. By his means you will be immediately placed on an easy footing with all the leading persons of the Russian court. You will go on from one step to another, till you are at the height which I have in view. Now for my grand object.—No, not now—for I have forty little notes about nothings to write this morning. Great things hang upon these nothings, so they should not be neglected. I must leave you, my amiable Olivia, and defer my grand object till to-morrow. GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER LXVI. LEONORA TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

DEAR MOTHER, Feb. 2, —.

THIS moment I have received a letter from my husband. He has accepted of an embassy to Petersburgh. I cannot guess by the few lines he has written, whether or not he wish-

es that I should accompany him. Most ardently I wish it; but if my offer should be refused, or if it should be accepted only because it could not be well refused; if I should be a burthen, a restraint upon him, I should wish myself dead.

Perhaps he accepts of this embassy on purpose that he may leave me and take another person with him: or perhaps, dearest mother, (I hardly dare to hope it)—perhaps he wishes to break off that connexion, and goes to Russia to leave temptation behind him. I know that this embassy was offered to him some weeks ago, and he had then no thoughts of accepting it.—O that I could see into his heart—that heart which used to be always open to me! If I could discover what his wishes are, I should know what mine ought to be. I have thoughts of going to town immediately to see him; at least I may take leave of him. Do you approve it? Write the moment you receive this: but I need not say that, for I am sure you will do so. Dearest mother, you have prophesied that his heart will return to me, and on this hope I live.

Your ever affectionate daughter LEONORA L——.

LETTER LXVII. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO LEONORA.

Feb. 6, ——

YES, my dear, I advise you by all means to go to town, and to see your husband. Your desire to accompany him to Russia he will know before you see him, for I have just written and despatched an express to him with your last letter, and with all those which I have received from you within these last six months. Leave Mr. L—— time to read them before he sees you; and do not hurry or fatigue yourself unnecessarily. You know that an embassy cannot be arranged in two days; therefore travel by easy journeys: you cannot do otherwise without hazard. Your courage in offering to undertake this long voyage with your husband is worthy of you, my beloved daughter. God bless and preserve you! If you go to Petersburgh, I will see you before you leave England.

Your affectionate mother, ——.

LETTER LXVIII. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO MR. L——.

Feb. 6, ——

PERHAPS this letter may find you at the feet of your mistress. Spare me, Sir, a few moments from your pleasures. You may perhaps expect reproaches from the mother of your wife; but let me assure you, that you have none to appre-

hend. For my daughter's sake, if not for yours, I would forbear. Never was departing love recalled by the voice of reproach; you shall not hear it from me, you have not heard it from Leonora. But mistake not the cause of her forbearance; let it not be attributed to pusillanimity of temper, or insensibility of heart.

Enclosed I send you all the letters which my daughter has written to me from the first day of her acquaintance with Lady Olivia to this hour. From these you will be enabled to judge of what she has felt for some months past, and of the actual state of her heart; you will see all the tenderness and all the strength of her soul.

It has ever been my fixed opinion, that a wife who loves her husband, and who has possessed his affections, may reclaim them from the lure of the most artful of her sex, by persevering kindness, temper and good sense, unless indeed her husband be a fool or a libertine. I have prophesied that my daughter will regain your heart; and upon this prophecy, to use her own expression, she lives. And even now, when its accomplishment is far removed, I am so steady in my opinion of her and of you; so convinced of the necessary operation of certain causes, the uniform result of certain conduct upon the human mind, that undismayed I repeat my prophecy.

Were you to remain in this kingdom I should leave things to their natural course; I should not interfere so far even as to send you Leonora's letters: but as you may be separated for years, I think it necessary now to put into your hands incontrovertible proofs of what she is, and what she has been. Do not imagine that I am so weak as to expect that the perusal of these letters will work a sudden change: but it is fit, that before you leave England, you should know that Leonora is not a cold, sullen, or offended wife; but one who loves you most tenderly, most generously; who, concealing the agony of her heart, waits with resignation for the time when she will be your refuge, and the permanent blessing of your life.

LETTER LXIX. MADAME DE P—— TO OLIVIA.

Paris.

And now, my charming Olivia, raise your fine eyes as high as ambition can look, and you will perhaps discover my grand object. You do not see it yet. Look again.—Do you not see the Emperor of Russia? What would you think of him for a lover? If it were only for novelty's sake, it would

really be pleasant to have a Czar at one's feet. Reign in his heart, and you in fact seat yourself invisibly on the throne of all the Russias: thence what a commanding prospect you have of the affairs of Europe! and how we should govern the world at our ease! The project is bold, but not impracticable. The ancients represent Cupid riding the Numidian lion, and why should he not tame the Russian bear? It would make a pretty design for a vignette. I can engrave as well as la Pompadour could at least, and anticipating your victory, my charming Olivia, I will engrave Cupid leading the bear in a chain of flowers. This shall be my seal. Mon cachet de faveur. Rousseau, you know, had un cachet de faveur, and un cachet de disgrace.

Courage, my fair politician! You have a difficult task; but the glory is in proportion to the labour, and those who value power properly, are paid by its acquisition for all possible fatigue and hardships. With your knowledge of our modes, you will be at Petersburgh the arbitress of delights. You have a charming taste and invention for fêtes and spectacles. Teach these people to vary their pleasures. Their monarch must adore you, if you banish from his presence that most dreadful enemy of kings, and most obstinate resident at courts, *ennui*. Trust, my Olivia, neither to your wit, nor your beauty, nor your accomplishments, but employ your "various arts of trifling prettily," and, take my word for it, you will succeed.

As I may not have an opportunity of sending you another private letter, and as lemon-juice, goulard, and all those sympathetic inks, are subject to unlucky accidents, I must send you all my secret instructions by the present safe conveyance.

You must absolutely sacrifice, my dear child, all your romantic notions, and all your taste for love, to the grand object. The Czar must not have the slightest cause for jealousy. These Czars make nothing, you know, of cutting off their mistresses' pretty heads upon the bare suspicion of an intrigue. But you must do what is still more difficult than to be constant, you must yield your will, and, what is more, you must never let this Czar guess that his will is not always your pleasure. Your humour, your tastes, your wishes, must be incessantly and with alacrity sacrificed to his. You must submit to the constraint of eternal court ceremony and court dissimulation. You must bear to be surrounded with masks, instead of the human face divine: and instead of fellow-creatures, you must content yourself with puppets. You will have the amusement of pulling the wires: but remember that you must wear a mask perpetually as well as others, and never attempt to speak, and never expect to hear the language of

truth or of the heart. You must not be the dupe of attachment in those who call themselves friends, or zealous and affectionate servants, &c. &c. You must have sufficient strength of character to bear continually in mind that all these professions are mere words, that all these people are alike false, and actuated but by one motive, self-interest. To secure yourself from secret and open enemies, you must farther have sufficient courage to live without a friend or a confidante, for such persons at court are only spies, traitors in the worst forms. All this is melancholy and provoking, to be sure; but all this you must see without feeling, or at least without showing a spark of indignation. A sentimental misanthropist, male or female, is quite out of place at court. You must see all that is odious and despicable in human nature, in a comic point of view; and you must consider your fellow-creatures as objects to be laughed at, not to be hated. Laughter, besides being good for the health, and consequently for the complexion, always implies superiority. Without this gratification to our vanity there would be no possibility of enduring that eternal penance of hypocrisy, and that solitary state of suspicion, to which the ambitious condemn themselves. I fear, my romantic Olivia, that you, who are a person used to yield to first impressions, and not quite accustomed to subdue your passions to your interest, will think that politics require too much from you, almost as much as constancy or religion. But consider the difference! for Heaven's sake, my dear, consider the greatness of our object! Would to God that I had the eloquence of Bossuet, and I would make you a convert from love and a proselyte to glory. Dare, my Olivia to be a martyr to ambition!—See! already high in air she holds a crown over your head—it is almost within your grasp—stretch out your white arm and seize it—fear not the thorns!—every crown has thorns—but who upon that account ever yet refused one? My dear Empress, I have the honour to kiss your powerful hands. GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER LXX. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Feb. 9, —.

You need not hurry yourself to come to town on my account, for by this change of ministry my embassy will be delayed some weeks.

A few days ago this delay would have been a terrible disappointment to me, yet now I feel a respite. A respite! you will exclaim; yes, my dear friend—so it is.—Such is the heart of man!—so changeable, so contradictory, so much at

variance with itself from day to-day, from hour to hour. Tacitus, I think, remarks, that "Princes are apt to will contradictories." I believe, from what I now feel, that every man under the dominion of passion is reduced to the same absurd and miserable condition.—I have just been reading some letters from Leonora, which have wrung my very heart; letters addressed to her mother, laying open every feeling of her mind for some months. My dear friend, what injustice have I done to this admirable woman! With what tenderness, with what delicacy has she loved me! while I, mistaking modesty for coldness, fortitude for indifference, have neglected, injured and abandoned her! With what sweetness of temper, with what persevering goodness has she borne with me, while, intoxicated with passion, I saw every thing in a false point of view! How often have I satisfied myself with the persuasion, that she scarcely observed my attachment to Olivia, or beheld it unconcerned, secure by the absence of love from the pangs of jealousy. How often have I accused her of insensibility whilst her heart was in tortures! Olivia was deceived also, and confirmed me in this cruel error. And all that time Leonora was defending her rival, and pleading her cause! With what generosity, with what magnanimity she speaks of Olivia in these letters! Her confidence was unbounded, her soul above suspicion; to the very last she doubted and blamed herself; dear amiable woman! blamed herself for our faults, for feeling that jealousy, which no wife who loved as she did could possibly subdue. She never betrayed it by a single word or look of reproach. Even though she fainted at that cursed fête champêtre, yet the moment she came to her senses, she managed so that none of the spectators could suspect she thought Olivia was her rival. My dear General, you will forgive me—as long as I praise Leonora you will understand me. At last you will acknowledge that I do justice to the merits of my wife. Justice!—no—I am unworthy of her. I have no heart like hers to offer in return for such love. She wishes to go with me to Petersburgh; she has forborne to make this offer directly to me; but I know it from her last letter to her mother, which now lies before me. How can I refuse?—and how can I accept? My soul is torn with violence different ways. How can I leave Leonora; and how can I tear myself from Olivia!—Even if her charms had no power over my heart, how could I with honour desert the woman who has sacrificed every thing for me! I will not shield myself from you, my friend, behind the word honour. See me as you have always seen me, without disguise, and now without defence. I respect, I love Leonora—but, alas! I am in love with Olivia!

Yours ever, F. L.

LETTER LXXI. MR. L—— TO OLIVIA.

Feb. 14, —.

TRIUMPHANT as you are over my heart, dear enchanting Olivia! you cannot make me false. I cannot, even to appease your anger, deny this morning what I said last night. It is inconsistent with all your professions, with your character, with your generous disposition, to desire me to "*abjure Leonora forever!*" it would be to render myself for ever unworthy of Olivia. I am convinced, that had you read the letters of which I spoke, you would have been touched, you would have been struck by them as I was: instead of being hurt and displeased by the impression that they made upon me, you would have sympathized in my feelings, you would have been indignant if I had not admired, you would have detested and despised me if I could have been insensible to "*so much goodness and generosity.*" I repeat my words, Olivia, I will not "*retract*" I cannot "*repent of them.*" My dear Olivia! when you reflect upon what is past, I am persuaded you will acknowledge, that your sensibility made you unjust. Indeed, my love, you did not show your usual candour; I had just read all that Leonora had written of you, all that she had urged against her mother in your defence; even when she had most cause to be irritated against us; I could not avoid being shocked by the different manner in which you spoke of her. Perhaps I told you so too abruptly—if I had loved you less I should have been more cautious and more calm—if I had esteemed you less, calmer still. I could then, possibly, have borne to hear you speak in a manner unbecoming yourself. Forgive me the pain I gave you—the pain I now give you, my dearest Olivia! My sincerity is the best security you can have for my future love. Banish therefore this unjust, this causeless jealousy: moderate this excessive sensibility for both our sakes, and depend upon the power you have over my heart. You cannot conceive how much I have felt from this misunderstanding—the first we have ever had. Let it be the last. I have spent a sleepless night. I am detained in town by provoking, tiresome, but necessary business. Meet me in the evening with smiles, my Olivia: let me behold in those fascinating eyes their wonted expression, and hear from your voice its usual, its natural tone of tenderness and love.

Ever devotedly yours. F. L.

LETTER LXXII. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Feb. 14, —.

You have spoken daggers to me! Come not to Richmond this evening! I cannot—will not see you! Not for the universe would I see you with my present feelings!

Write to me more letters like that which I have just received. Dip your pen in gall, find words more bitter than those which you have already used. Accuse me of want of candour, want of generosity, want of every amiable, every estimable quality. Upbraid me with the loss of what you have bereft me. Recollect every sacrifice that I have made, and, if you can, imagine every sacrifice that I would still make for you—peace of mind, friends, country, fortune, fame, virtue; name them all, and triumph—and disdain your triumph! Remind me how low I am fallen—sink me lower still—insult, debase, humble me to the dust. Exalt my rival, unroll to my aching eyes the emblazoned catalogue of her merits, her claims to your esteem, your affection; number them over, dwell upon those that I have forfeited, those which can never be regained; tell me that such merits are above all price; assure me that beyond all her sex you respect, you admire, you love your wife; say it with enthusiasm, with fire in your eyes, with all the energy of passion in your voice; then bid me sympathize in your feelings—bid me banish jealousy—wonder at my alarm—call my sorrow anger—conjure me to restrain my sensibility. Restrain my sensibility! Unhappy Olivia! he is tired of your love. Let him then at once tell me the dreadful truth, and I will bear it. Any evil is better than uncertainty, than lingering hope. Drive all hope from my mind. Bid me despair and die—but do not stretch me on the rack of jealousy!—Yet if such be your cruel pleasure, enjoy it.—Determine how much I can endure and live. Stop just at the point when human nature sinks, that you may not lose your victim, that she may linger on from day to day, your sport and your derision. OLIVIA.

LETTER LXXIII. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR GENERAL, Feb. 16, —.

You will rejoice to hear that Olivia and I have been in a state of warfare for some days past, and you will be still more pleased when you learn the cause of our quarrel. On the day that I had been reading Leonora's letters I was rather later at Richmond than usual. Olivia, offended, insisted upon knowing by what I could possibly have been detained.

Her anger knew no bounds when she heard the truth. She made use of some expressions, in speaking of my wife, which I could not, I hope, have borne at any time, but which shocked me beyond measure at that moment. I defended Leonora with warmth. Olivia in a scornful tone talked of my wife's coldness of disposition, and bid me compare Lady Leonora's love with hers. It was a comparison I had it more in my power to make than Olivia was aware of; it was the most disadvantageous moment for her in which that comparison could be made. She saw or suspected my feelings, and perceived that all she had said of my Leonora's *incapability of loving*, produced an effect directly contrary to her expectations. Transported by jealousy, she then threw out hints respecting the Prince. I spoke as I felt, indignantly. I know not precisely what I said, but Olivia and I parted in anger. I have since received a passionate and fond note from her. But I feel unhappy. Dear General, when will you come to town?

Yours truly, F. L.

LETTER LXXIV. MRS. C—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

MY DEAR MADAM, Feb. 17, —.

Your Grace's cautions and entreaties to Lady Leonora not to over-exert and fatigue herself, were, alas! as ineffectual as mine. From the time she heard that Mr. L—— had accepted this embassy to Petersburgh, she was so eager to set out on her journey to town, and so impatient to see him, that neither her mind nor her body had one moment's tranquillity. She waited with indescribable anxiety for your Grace's answer to her letter; and the instant she was secure of your approbation, her carriage was ordered to the door. I saw that she was ill; but she would not listen to my fears; she repeated with triumph, that her mother made no objection to her journey, and that she had no apprehensions for herself. However she was obliged at last to yield. The carriage was actually at the door, when she was forced to submit to be carried to her bed. For several hours she was in such danger, that I never expected she could live till this day. Thank God! she is now safe. Her infant, to her great delight, is a boy: she was extremely anxious to have a son, because Mr. L—— formerly wished for one so much. She forbids me to write to Mr. L——, lest I should communicate the account of her *sudden illness* too abruptly.

She particularly requests that your Grace will mention to him this *accident* in the least alarming manner possible. Your

Grace shall hear from me again next post. Lady Leonora has now fallen asleep, and seems to sleep quietly. Who should sleep in peace if she cannot! I never saw her equal.

My dear Madam, I am, with respect and attachment, your Grace's sincerely affectionate, HELEN C——.

It is with extreme concern I am forced to add, that since I wrote this letter the child has been so ill that I have fears for his life.—His poor mother!

LETTER LXXV. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

MY DEAR GENERAL, Feb. 21.—.

ALL is upon velvet again. Poor Olivia was excessively hurt by my letter: she was ill for two days—seriously ill, as Josephine assures me. Yesterday I at length obtained admittance. Olivia was all softness, all candour: she acknowledged that she had been wrong, and in so sweet a voice! She blamed herself till I could no longer think her blameable. She seemed so much humbled and depressed, such a tender melancholy appeared in her bewitching eyes, that I could not resist the fascination. I certainly gave her some cause for displeasure that unfortunate evening; for as Olivia has strong passions and exquisite sensibility, I should not have been so abrupt. A fit of jealousy may seize the best and most generous mind, and may prompt to what it would be incapable of saying or thinking in dispassionate moments. I am sure that Olivia has, upon reflection, felt more pain from this affair than I have. My Russian embassy is still in *abeyance*. Ministers seem to know their own minds as little as I know mine. Ambition has its quarrels and follies as well as love. At all events I shall not leave England till next month; and I shall not go down to L—— Castle till I have received my last instructions from our court, and till the day for my sailing is fixed. The parting with Leonora will be a dreadful difficulty. I cannot think of it steadily. But as she herself says, "is it not better that she should lose a year of my affections than a life?" The Duchess is mistaken in imagining it possible that any woman, let her influence be ever so great over my heart, could prejudice me against my amiable, my admirable wife. What has just passed between Olivia and me convinces me that it is impossible. She has too much knowledge of my character to hazard in future a similar attempt. No, my dear friend, be assured that I would not suffer it. I have not yet lost all title to your esteem or to my own. This enchantress may intoxicate me with her cup, but shall never degrade me;

and I should feel myself less degraded even by losing the human form, than by forfeiting that principle of honour and virtue, which more nobly distinguishes man from brute.

Yours most sincerely, F. L.

LETTER LXXVI. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Feb. 23, —.

It is well that I did not answer your letter of Saturday before I received that of Monday. My congratulations upon your quarrel with your fair one might have come just as you were kissing hands upon a reconciliation.

I have often found a great convenience in writing a bad hand; my letters are so little like what they are intended for, and have among them such equality of unintelligibility, that each seems either; and with the slightest alteration, each will stand and serve for the other. My *m*, *n*, and *u*, are convertible letters; so are the terms and propositions of your present mode of reasoning, my dear L——, and I perceive that you find your account in it. Upon this I congratulate you; and I congratulate my Lady Leonora upon your being detained some weeks longer in England. Those who have a just cause need never pray for victory; they need only ask the gods for time. Time always brings victory to truth, and shame to falsehood. But you are not worthy of such fine apothegms. At present "You are not fit to hear yourself convinced." I will wait for a better opportunity, and have patience with you, if I can.

You seem to plume yourself mightily upon your resolve to do justice to the merits of your wife, and upon the courage you have shown in stuffing cotton into your ears to prevent your listening to the voice of the Syren: but pray take the cotton out, and hear all she can say or sing. Lady Leonora cannot be hurt by any thing Olivia can say, but her own malice may destroy herself.

In the mean time, as you tell me that you are upon velvet again, I am to presume that you are perfectly at ease; and I should be obliged to you, if, as often as you can find leisure, you would send me bulletins of your happiness. I have never yet been in love with one of these high-flown heroines, and I am really curious to know what degree of felicity they can bestow upon a man of common sense. I should be glad to profit by the experience of a friend.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER LXXVII. OLIVIA TO MADAME DE P——.

Richmond.

ACCEPT my sincere thanks, inimitable Gabrielle! for having taken off my hands a lover, who really had half wearied me to death. If you had dealt more frankly with me, I could however have saved you much superfluous trouble and artifice. I now perfectly comprehend the cause of poor R***'s strange silence some months ago; he was then under the influence of your charms, and it was your pleasure to deceive me even when there was no necessity for dissimulation. You knew the secret of my growing attachment to L——, and must have foreseen that R*** would be burthensome to me. You needed therefore only to have treated me with candour, and you would have gained a lover without losing a friend: but Madame de P—— is too accomplished a politician to go the simple straight road to her object. I now perfectly comprehend why she took such pains to persuade me that an imperial lover was alone worthy of my charms. She was alarmed by an imaginary danger Believe me, I am incapable of disputing with any one *les restes d'un cœur*.

Permit me to assure you, Madam, that your incomparable talents for explanation will be utterly thrown away on me in future. I am in possession of the whole truth, from a person whose information I cannot doubt: I know the precise date of the commencement of your connexion with R***, so that you must perceive it will be impracticable to make me believe that you have not betrayed my easy confidence.

I cannot however, without those pangs of sentiment which your heart will never experience, reflect upon the treachery, the perfidy of one who has been my bosom friend.—Return my letters, Gabrielle.—With this you will receive certain *souvenirs*, at which I could never henceforward look without sighing. I return you that ring I have so long worn with delight, the picture of that treacherous eye,* which you know so well how to use.—Adieu, Gabrielle.—The illusion is over. —How many of the illusions of my fond heart have been dispelled by time and treachery! OLIVIA.

LETTER LXXVIII. MADAME DE P—— TO MONSIEUR R***.

Paris, — 18, —.

I HAVE just received the most extravagant letter imaginable from your Olivia. Really you may congratulate yourself, my

* Certain ladies at this time carried pictures of the eyes of their favourites.

dear friend, upon having recovered your liberty. 'Twere better to be a galley-slave at once, than to be bound to please a woman for life, who knows not what she would have either in love or friendship.—Can you conceive any thing so absurd as her upbraiding me with treachery, because I know the value of a heart of which she tells me she was more than half tired; as if I were to blame for her falling in love with Mr. L——, and as if I did not know the whole progress of her inconstancy. Her letters to me give a new history of the birth and education of Love. Here we see love born of Envy, nursed by *Ennui*, and dandled in turn by all the vices.

And my Lady Olivia fancies that she is a perfect French woman! There is nothing we Parisians abhor and ridicule so much as these foreign, and always awkward, caricatures of our manners. With us there are many who, according to a delicate distinction, lose their virtue, without losing their taste for virtue; but I flatter myself there are few who resemble Olivia entirely: who have neither the virtues of a man nor of a woman. One cannot even say, that "her head is the dupe of her heart," since she has no heart. But enough of such a tiresome and incomprehensible subject.

How I overvalued that head, when I thought it could ever be fit for politics! 'Tis well we did not commit ourselves. You see how prudent I am, my dear R***, and how much those are mistaken who think that we women are not fit to be trusted with secrets of state. Love and politics make the best mixture in the world. Adieu. Victoire summons me to my toilette.

GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER LXXIX. MADAME DE P—— TO LADY OLIVIA.

Paris, — 18, —.

REALLY, my dear Olivia, this is too childish. What! make a complaint in form against me for taking a lover off your hands when you did not know what to do with him! Do you quarrel in England every time you change partners in a country dance? But I must be serious; for the high sounding words *treachery* and *perfidy* are surely sufficient to make any body grave. Seriously then, if you are resolved to be tragical, *et de me faire une scène*, I must submit—console myself, and, above all things, take care not to be ridiculous.

Your letters, as you desire it so earnestly, and with so much reason, shall be returned by the first safe conveyance; but excuse me if I forbear to restore your *souvenirs*. With us Parisians this returning of keepsakes has been out of fashion since the days of Molière and *Le dépit amoureux*.

Adieu, my charming Olivia! I was going to say, I embrace you tenderly; but I believe, according to your English etiquette, I must now conclude with

I have the honour to be, Madam, your most odedient humble servant, GABRIELLE DE P——.

LETTER LXXX. FROM OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Tuesday Morning.

COME not to Richmond to-day; I am not in spirits to see you, my dearest L——. Allow me to indulge my melancholy retired from every human eye. OLIVIA.

LETTER LXXXI. FROM LADY OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Tuesday Evening.

"EXPLAIN to you the cause of my melancholy."—Vain request!—cruel as vain! Your ignorance of the cause too well justifies my sad presentiments. Were our feelings in unison, as once they were, would not every chord of your heart vibrate responsively to mine?

With me love is an absorbing vortex of the soul, into which all other thoughts, feelings and ideas are irresistibly impelled; with you it is but as the stranger stream that crosses the peaceful lake, and as it flows wakens only the surface of the slumbering waters, communicating to them but a temporary agitation. With you, my dear, but too tranquil-minded friend, love is but one amid the vulgar crowd of pleasures; it concentrates not your ideas, it entrances not your faculties; it is not, as in my heart, the supreme delight, which renders all others tasteless, the only blessing which can make life supportable, the sole, sufficient object of existence. Alas! how cruelly different is the feeble attachment that I have inspired from that all-powerful sentiment to which I live a victim! Countless symptoms, by you unheeded, mark, to my love-watchful eye, the decline of passion. How often am I secretly shocked by the cold carelessness of your words and manner! How often does the sigh burst from my bosom, the tear fall from my eye, when you have left me at leisure to recal, by memory's torturing power, instances of your increasing indifference! Seek not to calm my too well founded fears. Professions, with all their unmeaning inanimate formality, but irritate my anguish. Permit me to indulge, to feed upon my grief in silence. Ask me no more to explain to you the cause of my melancholy. Too plainly, alas! I feel it is beyond

my utmost power to endure it. Amiable Werter! divine St. Preux! you would sympathize in my feelings! Sublime Goethe! all eloquent Rousseau! you alone could feel as I do, and you alone could paint my anguish.

The miserable OLIVIA.

LETTER LXXXII. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

March 1, —.

EXPECT no bulletin of happiness from me, my friend. I find it impossible to make Olivia reasonable. She has superior talents, accomplishments, beauty, grace, all that can attract and fascinate the human heart—that could triumph over every feeling, every principle that opposed her power—she lives with the man she loves and yet she is miserable.

Rousseau, it has been said, never really loved any woman but his own Julie; I have lately been tempted to think, that Olivia never loved any man but St. Preux. Werter, perhaps, and some other German heroes, might dispute her heart even with St. Preux: but as for me, I begin to be aware, that I am loved only as a feeble resemblance of those divine originals (to whom, however, my character bears not the slightest similarity,) and I am often indirectly, and sometimes directly reproached with my inferiority to imaginary models. But how can a plain Englishman hope to reach

"The high sublime of deep absurd?"

I am continually reviled for not using a romantic language, which I have never learned; and which, as far as I can judge, is foreign to all natural feeling. I wish to make Olivia happy. There is nothing I would not do to satisfy her of my sincerity, but nothing I can do will suffice. She has a sort of morbid sensibility, which is more alive to pain than pleasure, more susceptible of jealousy than of love. No terms are sufficiently strong to convince her of my affection, but an unguarded word makes her miserable for hours. She requires to be agitated by violent emotions, though they exhaust her mind, and leave her spiritless and discontented. In this alternation of rapture and despair all her time passes. As she says of herself, she has no soul but for love: she seems to think it a crime against sentiment to admit of relief from common occupations or indifferent subjects; with a sort of superstitious zeal she excludes all thoughts but those which relate to one object, and in this spirit of amorous mysticism she actually makes a penance even of love. I am astonished that her heart can endure this variety of self-inflicted torments. What

will become of Olivia when she ceases to love and be loved? And what passion can be durable which is so violent as hers, and to which no respite is allowed? No affection can sustain these hourly trials of suspicion and reproach.

Jealousy of Leonora has taken such possession of Olivia's imagination, that she misinterprets all my words and actions. By restraining my thoughts, by throwing obstacles in the way of my affection for my wife, she stimulates and increases it: she forces upon me continually those comparisons which she dreads. Till I knew Olivia more intimately than the common forms of a first acquaintance, or the illusions of a treacherous passion permitted, her defects did not appear; but now that I suffer, and that I see her suffer daily, I deplore them bitterly. Her happiness rests and weighs heavily on my honour. I feel myself bound to consider and to provide for the happiness of the woman who has sacrificed to me all independent means of felicity. A man without honour or humanity may perhaps finish an intrigue as easily as he can begin it, but this is not exactly the case of your imprudent friend. F. L.

LETTER LXXXIII. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

March 3, —.

Ay, ay! just as I thought it would be. This is all the comfort, my dear friend, that I can give you; all the comfort that wise people usually afford their friends in distress. Provided things happen just as they predicted, they care but little what is suffered in the accomplishment of their prophecies. But seriously, my dear L——, I am not sorry that you are in a course of vexation. The more you see of your charmer the better. She will allay your intoxication by gentle degrees, and send you sober home. Pray keep in the course you have begun, and preserve your patience as long as possible. I should be sorry that you and Olivia quarrelled violently, and parted in a passion: such quarrels of lovers are proverbially the renewal of love.

"Il faut délier l'amitié, il faut couper l'amour."

In some cases this maxim may be just, but not in the present instance. I would rather wait till the knot is untied, than cut it; for when once you see the art with which it was woven, a similar knot can never again perplex you.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER LXXXIV. FROM OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Richmond, Saturday.

You presume too much upon your power over my heart, and upon the softness of my nature. Know that I have spirit as well as tenderness—a spirit that will neither be injured nor insulted with impunity. You were amazed, you say, by the violence which I showed yesterday. Why did you provoke that violence, by opposing the warmest wish of my heart? and with a calmness that excited my tenfold indignation! Imagine not that I am a tame, subjugated female, to be treated with neglect if I remonstrate, and caressed as the price of obedience. Fancy not that I am one of your chimney-corner, household goddesses, doomed to the dull uniformity of domestic worship, destined to be adored, to be hung with garlands, or undeified or degraded with indignity! I have been accustomed to a different species of worship; and the fondness of my weak heart has not yet sunk me so low, and rendered me so abject, that I cannot assert my rights. You tell me, that you are unconscious of giving me any just cause of offence. Just cause!—How I hate the cold accuracy of your words! This single expression is sufficient offence to a heart like mine. You entreat me to be reasonable. Reasonable! —Did ever man talk of reason to a woman he loved? When once a man has recourse to reason and precision, there is an end of love. No just cause of offence!—What, have I no cause to be indignant, when I find you thus trifle with my feelings, postpone from week to week, and month to month, our departure from this hateful country!

"Bid me hope on from day to day,
And wish and wish my soul away."

Yes, you know it to be the most ardent wish of my soul to leave England; you know that I cannot enjoy a moment's peace of mind whilst I am here; yet in this racking suspense it is your pleasure to detain me. No, it shall not be—this shall not go on!—It is in vain you tell me that the delay originates not with you, that you must wait for instructions and I know not what. Paltry diplomatic excuses!

OLIVIA.

LETTER LXXXV. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

March 6, —.

AMUSE yourself, my good General, at my expense: I know that you are seriously interested for my happiness; but the way is not quite so clear before me as you imagine. It is extremely easy to be philosophic for our friends; but difficult

to be so for ourselves when our passions are concerned. Indeed this would be a contradiction in terms; you might as well talk of a cold sun, or of hot ice, as of a philosopher falling in love, or of a man in love being a philosopher. You say that Olivia will wear out my passion, and that her defects will undo the work of her charms. I acknowledge that she sometimes ravels the web she has woven; but she is miraculously expeditious and skilful in repairing the mischief: the magical tissue again appears firm as ever, glowing with brighter colours, and exhibiting finer forms.

In plain prose, my dear friend; for as you are not in love, you will find it difficult to follow my poetic flights; in plain prose, I must confess that Olivia has the power to charm and touch my heart even after she has provoked me to the utmost verge of human patience. She knows her power, and I am afraid this tempts her to abuse it. Her temper, which formerly appeared to me all feminine gentleness, is now irritable and violent; but I am persuaded, that this is not her natural disposition; it is the effect of her present unhappy state of mind. Tortured by remorse and jealousy, if in the height of their paroxysms Olivia make me suffer from their fury, is it for me to complain? I who caused, should at least endure the evil.

Every thing is arranged for my embassy, and the day is fixed for our leaving England. I go down to L—— Castle next week.

Your faithful F. L.

LETTER LXXXVI. JOSEPHINE TO VICTOIRE, MADAME DE P——'S WOMAN.

Richmond, March 6, —.

I AM in despair, dear Victoire; and unless your genius can assist me, absolutely undone! Here is this romantic lady of mine determined upon a journey to Russia with her new English lover. What whims ladies take into their heads, and how impossible it is to make them understand reason! I have been labouring in vain to convince my Lady Olivia that this is the most absurd scheme imaginable: and I have repeated to her all I learnt from Lady F——'s women, who are just returned from Petersburgh, and whom I met at a party last night, all declaring they would rather die a thousand deaths than go through again what they have endured. Such seas of ice! such going in sledges! such barbarians! such beds! and scarcely a looking-glass! And nothing fit to wear but what one carries with one, and God knows how long we may stay.

At Petersburgh the coachmen's ears are frozen off every night on their boxes waiting for their ladies. And there are bears and wild beasts, I am told, howling with their mouths wide open night and day in the forests which we are to pass through; and even in the towns the men, I hear, are little better, for it is the law of the country for the men to beat their wives, and many wear long beards. How horrid!—My Lady F——'s woman, who is a Parisian born, and very pretty, if her eyes were not so small, and better dressed than her lady always, except diamonds, assures me upon her honour, she never had a civil thing said to her whilst she was in Russia, except by one or two Frenchmen in the suite of the embassadors.

These Russians think of nothing but drinking brandy, and they put pepper into it! Mon Dieu, what savages! Put pepper into brandy! But that is inconceivable! Positively I will never go to Petersburgh. And yet if my lady goes what will become of me? for you know my sentiments for Brunel, and he is decided to accompany my Lady, so I cannot stay behind.

But absolutely I am shocked at this intrigue with Mr. L——, and my conscience reproaches me terribly with being a party concerned in it; for in this country an affair of gallantry between married people is not so light a thing as with us. Here wives sometimes love their husbands seriously, as if they were their lovers; and my Lady Leonora L—— is one of this sort of wives. She is very unhappy, I am told. One day at L—— Castle, I assure you my heart quite bled for her, when she gave me a beautiful gown of English muslin, little suspecting me then to be her enemy. She is certainly very unsuspicious! and very amiable, and I wish to Heaven her husband would think as I do, and take her with him to Petersburgh instead of carrying off my Lady Olivia and me! Adieu, mon chat! Embrace every body I know tenderly for me. JOSEPHINE.

LETTER LXXXVII. MRS. C—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

MY DEAR MADAM, March 7, —.

I BELIEVE when I wrote last to your Grace, I said, that I had no hopes of the child's life. From the moment of his birth there was but little probability of his being any thing but a source of misery to his mother. I cannot, on her account, regret that the struggle is over. He expired this morning. My poor friend had hopes to the last, though I had none; and it was most painful and alarming, to see the feverish anxiety

with which she watched over her little boy, frequently repeating, "Mr. L—— used to wish so much for a son—I hope the boy will live to see his father."

Last night, partly by persuasion, partly by compulsion, I prevailed with her to let the child be taken out of her room.

This morning, as soon as it was light, I heard her bell ring; the poor little thing was at that moment in convulsions; and knowing that Lady Leonora rang to inquire for it, I went to prepare her mind for what I knew must be the event. The moment I came into the room she looked eagerly in my face, but did not ask me any questions about the child. I sat down by the side of her bed; but without listening to what I said about her own health, she rang her bell again more violently than before. Susan came in. Susan!—without my child!—said she, starting up. Susan hesitated, but I saw by her countenance that it was all over—so did Lady Leonora. She said not a word, but drawing her curtain suddenly, she lay down, and never spoke or stirred for three hours. The first words she said afterwards were to me.

"You need not move so softly, my dear Helen, I am not asleep. Have you my mother's last letter? I think my mother says that she will be here to-morrow. She is very kind to come to me. Will you be so good as to write to her immediately, and send a servant with your letter as soon as you can to meet her on the road, that she may not be *surprised* when she arrives."

Lady Leonora is now more composed and more like herself than she has been for some time past. I rejoice that your Grace will so soon be here, because you will be her best possible consolation; and I do not know any other person in the world who could have sufficient influence, to prevent her from attempting to set out upon a journey, before she can travel with safety. To do her justice, she has not hinted that such were her intentions; but still I know her mind so well, that I am certain what her thoughts are, and what her actions would be. Most ladies talk more than they act, but Leonora acts more decidedly than she talks.

Believe, me, dear Madam, with much respect, your Grace's sincerely affectionate HELEN C——.

LETTER LXXXVIII. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

March 12, —.

I THANK you, my excellent friend, for the kindness of your last letter,* which came to me at the time I wanted it most. In

* This letter does not appear.

the whole course of my life I never felt so much self-reproach as I have done since I heard of the illness of Leonora and the loss of my son. From this blow my mind will not easily recover. Of all torments self-reproach is the worst. And even now I cannot follow the dictates of my own heart and of my better judgment.

In Olivia's company I am compelled to repress my feelings; she cannot sympathize in them; they offend her: she is dissatisfied even with my silence, and complains of my being out of spirits. Out of spirits!—How can I be otherwise at present? Has Olivia no touch of pity for a woman, who was once her friend, who always treated her with generous kindness? But perhaps I am unreasonable, and expect too much from female nature.

At all events, I wish that Olivia would spare me at this moment her sentimental metaphysics. She is for ever attempting to prove to me that I cannot love so well as she can. I admit that I cannot talk of love so finely. I hope all this will not go on when we arrive at Petersburgh.

The ministry at last know their own minds. I saw —— to-day, and every thing will be quickly arranged; therefore, my dear friend, do not delay coming to town, to

Your obliged, F. L.

LETTER LXXXIX. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

March 14, —.

Perhaps you are a little unreasonable! Indeed, my dear friend, I do not think you a little unreasonable, but very nearly stark mad. What! quarrel with your mistress because she is not sorry that your wife is ill, and because she cannot sympathize in your grief for the loss of your son! Where, except perhaps in absurd novels, did you ever meet with these paragons of mistresses, who were so magnanimous and so generous as to sacrifice their own reputations, and then be satisfied to share the only possible good remaining to them in life, the heart of their lover, with a rival more estimable, more amiable than themselves, and who has the advantage of being a wife? This sharing of hearts, this union of souls, with this opposition of interests, this metaphysical gallantry is absolute nonsense, and all who try it in real life will find it so to their cost. Why should you, my dear L——, expect such superlative excellence from your Olivia? Do you think, that a woman by losing one virtue increases the strength of those that remain, as it is said that the loss of one of our senses renders all the others more acute? Do you think that a lady,

by yielding to love, and by proving that she has not sufficient resolution or forbearance to preserve the honour of her sex, gives the best possible demonstration of her having sufficient strength of character to rise superior to all the other weaknesses incident to human, and more especially to female nature—envy and jealousy for instance?

No, no, my good friend, you have common sense, though you lately have been sparing of it in action. You had a wife, and a good wife, and you had some chance of being happy; but with a wife and a mistress, granting them to be both the best of their kind, the probabilities are rather against you. I speak only as a man of the world; morality you know is now merely an affair of calculation. According to the most approved tables of happiness, you have made a bad bargain. But be just, at any rate, and do not blame your Olivia for the inconveniences and evils inseparable from the species of connexion that you have been pleased to form. Do you expect the whole course of society and the nature of the human heart to change for your special accommodation? Do you believe in truth by wholesale, and yet in detail expect a happy exception in your own favour?—Seriously, my dear friend, you must either break off this connexion or bear it. I shall see you in a few days.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XC. MRS. C—— TO MISS B——.

March 6, —.

LEONORA has recovered her strength surprisingly. She was so determined to be well, that her body dared not contradict her mind. Her excellent mother has been of the greatest possible service to us, for she has had sufficient influence to prevent her daughter from exerting herself too much. Her Grace had a letter from Mr. L—— to-day—very short, but very kind—at least all that I heard read of it. He has set my heart somewhat more at ease by the comfortable assurance, that he will not leave England without seeing Lady Leonora. I have the greatest hopes from this interview! I have not felt so happy for many months—but I will not be too sanguine. Mr. L—— talks of being here the latter end of this month. The Duchess, with her usual prudence, intends to leave her daughter before that time, lest Mr. L—— should be constrained by her presence, or should imagine that Leonora acts from any impulse but that of her own heart. I also, though much against my inclinations, shall decamp; for he might perhaps consider me as an adviser, caballer, confidante,

or at least a troublesome spectator. All reconciliation scenes should be without spectators. Men do not like to be seen on their knees: they are at a loss, like Sir Walter Raleigh in "The Critic;" they cannot get off gracefully. I am, dear Margaret,

Yours affectionately, HELEN C——.

LETTER XCI. GENERAL B—— TO MR. L——.

MY DEAR L——, March 20, —.

ASK yourself in the name of common sense why you should go to Petersburgh with this sentimental coquette, this romantic termagant, of whom I see you are already more than half tired. As to your being bound to her in honour, I cannot see how. Why should you make honour, justice, humanity and gratitude, plead so finely all on one side, and that the wrong side of the question? Have none of these one word to whisper in favour of any body in this world but of a worthless mistress, who makes you miserable? I think you have learned from your heroine to be so expert in sentimental logic, that you can change virtues into vices, and vices into virtues, till at last you do not know them asunder. Else why should you make it a point of conscience to abandon your wife?—just at the moment too when you are thoroughly convinced of her love for you, when you are touched to the soul by her generous conduct, and when your heart longs to return to her?

Please to remember that this Lady Olivia's reputation was not unimpeached before her acquaintance with you, and do not take more glory or more blame to yourself than properly falls to your share. Do not forget that *poor* R*** was your predecessor, and do not let this delicate Lady rest all the weight of her shame upon you, as certain Chinese culprits rest their portable pillories on the shoulders of their friends.

In two days I shall follow this letter, and repeat in person all the interrogatories I have just put to you, my dear friend. Prepare yourself to answer me sincerely such questions as I shall ask.

Yours truly, J. B.

LETTER XCII. FROM OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Monday,
12 o'Clock.

FOR a few days did you say? To *bid adieu?* Oh! if once more you return to that fatal castle, that enchanted

home, Olivia for ever loses all power over your heart. Bid her die, stab her to the heart, and she will call it mercy, and she will bless you with her dying lips; but talk not of leaving your Olivia! On her knees she writes this, her face all bathed in tears. And must she in her turn implore and supplicate? Must she abase herself even to the dust? Yes—love like hers vanquishes even the stubborn potency of female pride.

Your too fond OLIVIA.

LETTER XCIII. FROM OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

[Dated a few hours after the preceding.]

Monday,
Half past Three.

OH! this equivocating answer to my fond heart! Passion makes, and admits of no compromise. Be mine, and wholly mine, or never, never will I survive your desertion! I can be happy only whilst I love; I can love only whilst I am beloved with fervency equal to my own; and when I cease to love, I cease to exist! No coward fears restrain my soul. The word suicide shocks not my ear, appals not my understanding. Death I consider but as the eternal rest of the wretched, the sweet, the sole refuge of despair.

Your resolute OLIVIA.

LETTER XCIV. FROM OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Tuesday.

RETURN! return! on the wings of love return to the calm, the prudent, the happy, the transcendantly happy Leonora! Return—but not to bid her adieu—return to be hers for ever, and only hers. I give you back your faith—I *give* you back your promises—you have *taken* back your heart.

But if you should desire once more to see Olivia, if you should have any lingering wish to bid her a last adieu, it must be this evening.—To-morrow's sun rises not for Olivia. For her but a few short hours remain.—Love, let them be all thy own! Intoxicate thy victim, mingle pleasure in the cup of death, and bid her fearless quaff it to the dregs!——

LETTER XCV. MR. L—— TO GENERAL B——.

Thursday.

MY DEAR FRIEND, March 24, —.

You have by argument and raillery, and by every means that kindness and goodness could devise, endeavoured to expel from my mind a passion which you justly foresaw would be destructive of my happiness, and of the peace of a most estimable and amiable woman. With all the skill that a thorough knowledge of human nature in general, and of my peculiar character and foibles could bestow, you have employed those

——" Words and spells which can control,
Between the fits, the fever of the soul."

Circumstances have operated in conjunction with your skill to " medicine me to repose." The fits have gradually become weaker and weaker, the fever is now gone, but I am still to suffer for the extravagances committed during its delirium. I have entered into engagements which must be fulfilled; I have involved myself in difficulties from which I see no method of extricating myself honourably. Notwithstanding all the latitude which the system of modern gallantry allows to the conscience of our sex, and in spite of the convenient maxim, which maintains that all arts are allowable in love and war, I think that a man cannot break a promise, whether made in words or by tacit implication, on the faith of which a woman sacrifices her reputation and happiness. Lady Olivia has thrown herself upon my protection. I am as sensible as you can be, my dear General, that scandal had attacked her reputation before our acquaintance commenced; but though the world had suspicions, they had no proofs; now there can be no longer any defence made for her character, there is no possibility of her returning to that rank in society to which she was entitled by her birth, and which she adorned with all the brilliant charms of wit and beauty; no happiness, no chance of happiness remains for her but from my constancy. Of naturally violent passions, unused to the control of authority, habit, reason or religion, and at this time impelled by love and jealousy, Olivia is on the brink of despair. I am not apt to believe that women die in modern times for love, nor am I easily disposed to think that I could inspire a dangerous degree of enthusiasm; yet I am persuaded that Olivia's passion, compounded as it is of various sentiments beside love, has taken such possession of her imagination, and is, as she fancies, so necessary to her existence, that if I were to abandon her, she would destroy that life, which she has already attempted, I thank God! ineffectually. What

a spectacle is a woman in a paroxysm of rage!—a woman we love, or whom we have loved!

March 25, —.

Excuse me, my dear friend, if I wrote incoherently, for I have been interrupted many times since I began this letter. I am this day overwhelmed by a multiplicity of affairs, which, in consequence of Olivia's urgency to leave England, immediately, must be settled with an expedition for which my head is not at present well qualified. I do not feel well: I can command my attention but on one subject, and on that all my thoughts are to no purpose. Which ever way I now act, I must endure and inflict misery. I must either part from a wife who has given me the most tender, the most touching proofs of affection; a wife who is all that a man can esteem, admire, and love; or I must abandon a mistress, who loves me with all the desperation of passion, to which she would fall a sacrifice. But why do I talk as if I were still at liberty to make a choice?—My head is certainly very confused. I forgot that I am bound by a solemn promise, and this is the evil which distracts me. I will give you, if I can, a clear narrative.

Last night I had a terrible scene with Olivia. I foresaw that she would be alarmed by my intended visit to L—— Castle, even though it was but to take leave of my Leonora. I abstained from seeing Olivia to avoid altercation, and with all the delicacy in my power I wrote to her, assuring her that my resolution was fixed. Note after note came from her with pathetic and passionate appeals to my heart; but I was still resolute. At length the day before that on which I was to set out for L—— Castle, she wrote to warn me, that if I wished to take a last farewell, I must see her that evening: her note concluded with, "to-morrow's sun will not rise for Olivia." This threat, and many strange hints of her opinions concerning suicide, I at the time disregarded, as only thrown out to intimidate a lover. However, knowing the violence of Olivia's temper, I was punctual to the appointed hour, fully determined by my firmness to convince her that these female wiles were vain.

My dear friend, I would not advise the wisest man and the most courageous upon earth to brave such dangers, confident in his strength. Even a victory may cost him too dear.

I found Olivia reclining on a sofa, her beautiful tresses unbound, her dress the perfection of elegant negligence. I half suspected that it was studied negligence: yet I could not help pausing, as I entered, to contemplate her figure. She never looked more beautiful—more fascinating. Holding out her

hand to me, she said, with her languid smile and tender expression of voice and manner, " You *are* come then to bid me farewell. I doubted whether . . . . But I will not upbraid —mine be all the pain of this last adieu. During the few minutes we have to pass together,

" Between us two let there be peace."

I sat down beside her, rather agitated, I confess, but commanding myself so that my emotion could not be visible. In a composed tone I asked why she spoke of a last adieu ? and observed that we should meet again in a few days.

Never ! replied Olivia. Weak woman as I am, love inspires me with sufficient force to make and to keep this resolution.

As she spoke, she took from her bosom a rose, and presenting it to me in a solemn manner, " Put this rose into water to night," continued she—" to-morrow it will be alive !"

Her look, her expressive eyes, seemed to say, this flower will be alive but Olivia will be dead. I am ashamed to confess, that I was silent, because I could not just then speak.

" I have used some precaution," resumed Olivia, " to spare you, my dearest L——, unnecessary pain.—Look around you."

The room, I now for the first time observed, was ornamented with flowers.

" This apartment, I hope," continued she, " has not the air of the chamber of death. I have endeavoured to give it a festive appearance, that the remembrance of your last interview with your once loved Olivia may be at least unmixed with horror."

At this instant, my dear General, a confused recollection of Rousseau's Heloise, the dying scene, and her room ornamented with flowers, came into my imagination, and destroying the idea of reality, changed suddenly the whole course of my feelings.

In a tone of raillery I represented to Olivia her resemblance to Julie, and observed, that it was a pity she had not a lover whose temper was more similar than mine to that of the divine St. Preux. Stung to the heart by my ill-timed raillery, Olivia started up from the sofa, broke from my arms with sudden force, snatched from the table a pen-knife, and plunged it into her side.

She was about to repeat the blow, but I caught her arm—she struggled.—" Promise me then," cried she, " that you will never more see my hated rival."

I cannot make such a promise, Olivia, said I, holding her uplifted arm forcibly. I will not make such a promise.

The words, "hated rival," which showed me that Olivia was actuated more by the spirit of hatred than love, made me reply in as decided a tone as even you could have spoken, my dear General. But I was shocked, and reproached myself with cruelty, when I saw the blood flow from her side; she was terrified. I took the knife from her powerless hand, and she fainted in my arms. I had sufficient presence of mind to reflect that what had happened should be kept as secret as possible; therefore without summoning Josephine, whose attachment to her mistress I have reason to suspect, I threw open the windows, gave Olivia air and water, and her senses returned: then I despatched my Swiss for a surgeon. I need not speak of my own feelings—no suspense could be more dreadful than that which I endured between the sending for the surgeon and the moment when he gave his opinion. He relieved me at once, by pronouncing it to be a slight flesh wound, that would be of no manner of consequence. Olivia, however, whether from alarm or pain, or from the sight of the blood, fainted three times during the dressing of her side; and though the surgeon assured her that it would be perfectly well in a few days, she was evidently apprehensive that we concealed from her the real danger. At the idea of the approach of death, which now took possession of her imagination, all courage forsook her, and for some time my efforts to support her spirits were ineffectual. She could not dispense with the services of Josephine; and from the moment this French woman entered the room there was nothing to be heard but exclamations the most violent and noisy. As to assistance, she could give none. At last her exaggerated demonstrations of horror and grief ended with,

"Dieu merci! au moins nous voila delivre de ce voyage affreux. Apparement qu'il ne sera plus question de ce vilain Petersburgh pour Madame."

A new train of thoughts was roused by these words in Olivia's mind; and looking at me, she eagerly inquired why the journey to Petersburgh was to be given up, if she was in no danger? I assured her that Josephine spoke at random, that my intentions with regard to the embassy to Russia were unaltered.

"Seulement retarde un peu?" said Josephine, who was intent only upon her own selfish object.—"Surement Madame ne voyagera pas dans cet etat."

Olivia started up, and looking at me with terrific wildness in her eyes:

"Swear to me, said she, swear that you will not deceive me or I will this instant tear open this wound, and never more suffer it to be closed."

"Deceive you, Olivia! cried I, what deceit can you fear from me?—What is it you require of me?"

"I require from you a promise, a solemn promise, that you will go with *me* to Russia."

"I solemnly promise that I will, said I—now be tranquil, Olivia, I beseech you."

The surgeon represented the necessity of keeping herself quiet, and declared that he would not answer for the cure of his patient on any other terms. Satisfied by the solemnity of my promise, Olivia now suffered me to depart. This morning she sends me word that in a few days she shall be ready to leave England? Can you meet me, my dear friend, at L—— Castle? I go down there to-day to bid adieu to my Leonora. From thence I shall proceed to Yarmouth, and embark immediately. Olivia will follow me.

Your obliged F. L.

LETTER XCVI. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

L—— Castle,
March 28, —.

DEAREST MOTHER,

My husband is here! at home with me, with your happy Leonora—and his heart is with her. His looks, his voice, his manner tell me so, and by them I never was deceived. No, he is incapable of deceit. Whatever have been his errors, he never stooped to dissimulation. He is again my own, still capable of loving me, still worthy of all my affection. I knew that the delusion could not last long, or rather you told me so, my best friend, and I believed you; you did him justice. He was indeed deceived—who might not have been deceived by Olivia? His passions were under the power of an enchantress; but now he has triumphed over her arts. He sees her such as she is, and her influence ceases.

I am not absolutely certain of all this; but I believe, because I hope it: yet he is evidently embarrassed, and seems unhappy; what can be the meaning of this? Perhaps he does not yet know his Leonora sufficiently to be secure of her forgiveness. How I long to set his heart at ease, and to say to him—let the past be forgotten for ever. How easy it is to the happy to forgive! There have been moments when I could not, I fear, have been just, when I am sure that I could not have been generous. I shall immediately offer to accompany Mr. L—— to Russia; I can have no further hesitation, for I see that he wishes it; indeed, just now he almost said so. His baggage is already embarked at Yarmouth—he sails in a few days—and in a few hours your daughter's fate, your daugh-

ter's happiness, will be decided. It is decided, for I am sure he loves me; I see, I hear, I feel it. Dearest mother, I write to you in the first moment of joy.—I hear his foot upon the stairs.

Your happy LEONORA L——.

LETTER XCVII. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

L—— Castle,
April 2, —.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

MY hopes are all vain. Your prophecies will never be accomplished. We have both been mistaken in Mr. L——'s character, and henceforward your daughter must not depend upon him for any portion of her happiness. I once thought it impossible that my love for him could be diminished; he has changed my opinion. Mine is not that species of weak or abject affection which can exist under the sense of ill-treatment and injustice, much less can my love survive esteem for its object.

I told you, my dear mother, and in the fond credulity of my heart I believed, that his affections had returned to me. But I was mistaken. He has not sufficient strength or generosity of soul to love me, or to do justice to my love. I offered to go with him to Russia—he answered,—"That is impossible."—Impossible!—Is it then impossible for him to do that which is just or honourable? or seeing what is right, must he follow what is wrong? or can his heart never more be touched by virtuous affections? Is his taste so changed, so depraved, that he can now be pleased and charmed only by what is despicable and profligate in our sex? Then I should rejoice that we are to be separated—separated for ever. May years and years pass away and wear out, if possible, the memory of all he has been to me! I think I could better, much better bear the total loss, the death of him I have loved, than endure to feel that he had survived both my affection and esteem; to see the person the same, but the soul changed; to feel every day, every hour, that I must despise what I have so admired and loved.

Mr. L—— is gone from hence. He leaves England the day after to-morrow. Lady Olivia is to *follow* him. I am glad that public decency is not to be outraged by their embarking together. My dearest mother, be assured that at this moment your daughter's feelings are worthy of you. Indignation, the indignation and the pride of virtue support her spirit. LEONORA L——.

LETTER XCVIII. GENERAL B—— TO LADY LEONORA L——.

Yarmouth, April 5, —.

HAD I not the highest confidence in Lady Leonora L——'s fortitude, I should not venture to write to her at this moment, knowing as I do, that she is but just recovered from a dangerous illness.

Mr. L—— had requested me to meet him at L—— Castle previous to his leaving England, but it was out of my power. I met him however on the road to Yarmouth; and as we travelled together, I had full opportunity of seeing the state of his mind. Permit me, the urgency of the case requires it, to speak without reserve, with the freedom of an old friend. I imagine that your Ladyship parted from Mr. L—— with feelings of indignation, at which I cannot be surprised: but if you had seen him as I saw him, indignation would have given way to pity. Loving you, Madam, as you deserve to be loved, most ardently, most tenderly; touched to his inmost soul by the proofs of affection he had seen in your letters, in your whole conduct, even to the last moment of parting, my unhappy friend felt himself bound to resist the temptation of staying with you, or of accepting your generous offer to accompany him to Petersburgh. He was bound by a solemn promise, which he could not break, though it was extorted from him, to save from suicide one whom he thinks he has injured, one who has thrown herself upon his protection. Of the conflict in his mind at parting with your Ladyship I can judge from what he suffered afterwards. I met Mr. L—— with feelings of extreme indignation, but before I had been an hour in his company, I never pitied any man so much in my life, for I never yet saw any one so truly wretched, and so thoroughly convinced that he deserved to be so. You know that he is not one who often gives way to his emotions, not one who expresses them much in words—but he could not command his feelings.

The struggle was too violent. I have no doubt that it was the real cause of his present illness. As the moment approached when he was to leave England, he became more and more agitated; but firm to his fatal promise. Towards evening he sunk into a sort of apathy and gloomy silence, from which he suddenly broke into delirious raving. At twelve o'clock last night, the night he was to have sailed, he was seized with a violent and infectious fever. As to the degree of immediate danger, the physicians here cannot yet pronounce. I have sent to town for Dr. ******. Your Ladyship may be certain that I shall not quit my friend, and that he shall have every possible assistance and attendance.

I am with the truest esteem, your Ladyship's faithful servant, J. B.

LETTER XCIX. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

L—— Castle,
April 6, —.

DEAR MOTHER,

THIS moment an express from General B——. My husband is dangerously ill at Yarmouth—a fever, brought on by the agitation of his mind. How unjust I have been! Forget all I said in my last. I write in the utmost haste—just setting out for Yarmouth. I hope to be there to-morrow.

Your affectionate LEONORA L——.

I open this to enclose the General's letter, which will explain every thing.

LETTER C. GENERAL B—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

Yarmouth,
April 8, —.

MY DEAR MADAM,

YOUR Grace, I find, is apprized of Lady LEONORA L——'s journey hither: I fear that you rely upon my prudence for preventing her exposing herself to the danger of catching this dreadful fever. But that has been beyond my power. Her Ladyship arrived late last night. I had foreseen the probability of her coming, but not the possibility of her coming so soon. I had taken no precautions, and she was in the house and upon the stairs in an instant. No intreaties, no arguments could stop her; I assured her that Mr. L——'s fever was pronounced by all the physicians to be of the most infectious kind. Dr. ***** joined me in representing that she would expose her life to almost certain danger if she persisted in her determination to see her husband! but she pressed forward, regardless of all that could be said. To the physicians she made no answer; to me she replied, "You are Mr. L——'s friend; but I am his wife—you have not feared to hazard your life for him, and do you think I can hesitate?—Is he less dear to me? or am I more selfish?" I urged that there was no necessity for more than one person's running this hazard; and that since it had fallen to my lot to be with my friend when he was first taken ill . . . . . She interrupted me,—"Is not this taking a cruel advantage of me, General? You know that I too would have been with Mr. L—— if . . . . . if it had been possible." Her manner, her pathetic emphasis, and the force of her implied meaning, struck me so much, that I was silent, and suffered her to pass on; but again the idea of her danger rushing upon my mind, I sprang before her to the door of Mr. L——'s apartment, and

opposed her entrance. "Then, General," said she calmly, "perhaps you mistake me—perhaps you have heard repeated some unguarded words of mine in the moment of indignation ..... unjust ..... you best know how unjust indignation!—and you infer from these that my affection for my husband is extinguished. I deserve this—but do not punish me too severely."

I still kept my hand upon the lock of the door, expostulating with Lady Leonora in your Grace's name, and in Mr. L——'s, assuring her that if he were conscious of what was passing, and able to speak, he would order me to prevent her seeing him in his present situation.

"And you too, General!" said she, bursting into tears, "I thought you were my friend—would you prevent me from seeing him? And is not he conscious of what is passing? And is not he able to speak? Sir, I must be admitted! You have done your duty—now let me do mine. Consider, my right is superior to yours. No power on earth should or can prevent a wife from seeing her husband when he is ..... Dear, dear General!" said she, clasping her raised hands, and falling suddenly at my feet, "let me see him but for one minute, and I will be grateful to you for ever!"

I could resist no longer—I tremble for the consequences. Her excellent friend Mrs. C——, accompanied her hither: but was prevented by Lady Leonora from entering this house. Would to God I could have had similar influence over Lady Leonora herself! But it is past now, and we must wait the event. I know your Grace sufficiently to be aware, that you ought to be told the whole truth. I have but little hopes of my poor friend's life.

With much respect, your Grace's faithful servant, J.B.

LETTER CI. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Richmond.

A MIST hung over my eyes, and "my ears with hollow murmurs rung," when the dreadful tidings of your alarming illness were announced by your cruel messenger. My dearest L——! why does inexorable destiny doom me to be absent from you at such a crisis? Oh! this fatal wound of mine! It would, I fear, certainly open again if I were to travel. So this corporeal being must be imprisoned here, while my anxious soul, my viewless spirit hovers near you, longing to minister each tender consolation, each nameless comfort that love alone can, with fond prescience and magic speed, summon round the couch of pain.

"O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly to you!" Why must I resign the sweetly-painful task of soothing you in the hour of sickness? And shall others, with officious zeal,

"Guess the faint wish, explain the asking eye?"

Alas! it must be so—even were I to fly to him, my sensibility could not support the scene. To behold him stretched on the bed of disease—perhaps of death, would be agony past endurance. Let firmer nerves than Olivia's, and hearts more callous, assume the offices from which they shrink not. 'Tis the fate, the hard fate of all endued with exquisite sensibility, to be palsied by the excess of their feelings, and to become imbecile at the moment their exertions are most necessary.

Your too tenderly sympathizing OLIVIA.

LETTER CII. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Yarmouth, April 8, —.

MY husband is alive, and that is all. Never did I see, nor could I have conceived such a change, and in so short a time! When I opened the door his eyes turned upon me with unmeaning eagerness: he did not know me. The good General thought my voice might have some effect. I spoke, but could obtain no answer, no sign of intelligence. In vain I called upon him by every name that used to reach his heart. I kneeled beside him, and took one of his burning hands in mine. I kissed it, and suddenly he started up, exclaiming, Olivia! Olivia!—with dreadful vehemence. In his delirium he raved about Olivia's stabbing herself, and called upon us to hold her arm, looking wildly towards the foot of the bed, as if the figure were actually before him. Then he sunk back, as if quite exhausted, and gave a deep sigh. Some of my tears fell upon his hand; he felt them before I perceived that they had fallen, and looked so earnestly in my face, that I was in hopes his recollection was returning; but he only said, "Olivia, I believe that you love me"—then sighed more deeply than before, drew his hand away from me, and, as well as I could distinguish, said something about Leonora.

But why should I give you the pain of hearing all these circumstances, my dear mother? It is enough to say, that he passed a dreadful night. This morning the physicians say, that if he passes this night—if—my dear Mother, what a terrible suspense! LEONORA L——.

LETTER CIII. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Yarmouth, April 8, —.

MORNING is at last come, and my husband is still alive, so there is yet hope. When I said, I thought I could bear to survive him, how little I knew of myself, and how little, how very little I expected to be so soon tried! All evils are remediable but one, that one which I dare not name.

The physicians assure me that he is better. His friend, to whose judgment I trust more, thinks as they do. I know not what to believe. I dread to flatter myself and to be disappointed. I will write again, dearest mother, to-morrow.

Your ever affectionate LEONORA L——.

LETTER CIV. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Wednesday,
April 12, —.

No material change since yesterday, my dear mother. This morning, as I was searching for some medicine, I saw on the chimney-piece a note from Lady Olivia ——. It might have been there yesterday, and ever since my arrival, but I did not see it. At any other time it would have excited my indignation, but my mind is now too much weakened by sorrow. My fears for my husband's life absorb all other feelings. I am quite stupified. The General will add a few lines.

LETTER CV. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Richmond, April 12.

WORDS cannot express what I have suffered since I wrote last! Oh! why do I not hear that the danger is over!—Long since would I have been with you, all that my soul holds dear, could I have escaped from these tyrants, these medical despots, who detain me by absolute force, and watch over me with unrelenting vigilance. I have consulted Dr. ***, who assures me that my fears of my wound opening, were I to take so long a journey, are too well-founded, that in the present feverish state of my mind he would not answer for the consequences. I heed him not.—Life I value not.—Most joyfully would I sacrifice myself for the man I love. But even could I escape from my persecutors, too well I know that to see you would be a vain attempt—too well I know that I should not be admitted. Your love, your fears for Olivia would barbarously banish her, and forbid her your dear, your

dangerous atmosphere. Too justly would you urge that my rashness might prove our mutual ruin—that in the moment of crisis or of convalescence, anxiety for me might defeat the kind purpose of nature. And even were I secure of your recovery, the delay, I speak not of the danger of my catching the disease, would, circumstanced as we are, be death to our hopes. We should be compelled to part. The winds would waft you from me. The waves would bear you to another region, far, O far from your OLIVIA.

LETTER CVI. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Yarmouth.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, April 14, —.

THE delirium has subsided. A few minutes ago, as I was kneeling beside him, offering up an almost hopeless prayer for his recovery, his eyes opened, and I perceived that he knew me. He closed his eyes again without speaking, opened them once more, and then looking at me fixedly, exclaimed: "It is not a dream! You are Leonora!—*my* Leonora!"

What exquisite pleasure I felt at the sound of these words, at the tone in which they were pronounced! My husband folded me in his arms; and, till I felt his burning lips, I forgot that he was ill.

When he came thoroughly to his recollection, and when the idea that his fever might be infectious occurred to him, he endeavoured to prevail upon me to leave the room. But what danger can there be for me *now?* My whole soul, my whole frame is inspired with new life. If he recover, your daughter may still be happy.

Postscript by General B——.

I fear that Lady Leonora is too sanguine in these hopes of her husband's recovery. J. B.

LETTER CVII. GENERAL B—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

MY DEAR MADAM, April 16, —.

MR. L—— has had a relapse, and is now more alarmingly ill than I have yet seen him: he does not know his situation, for his delirium has returned. The physicians give him over. Dr. H. says that we must prepare for the worst.

I have but one word of comfort for your Grace—that your admirable daughter's health has not yet suffered.

Your Grace's faithful servant, J. B.

LETTER CVIII. GENERAL B—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

MY DEAR MADAM, April 18, —.

A FEW hours ago my friend became perfectly sensible of his danger, and calling me to his bed-side, told me that he was eager to make use of the little time which he might have to live. He was quite calm and collected. He employed me to write his last wishes and bequests; and I must do him the justice to declare, that the strongest idea and feeling in his mind evidently was the desire to show his entire confidence in his wife, and to give her, in his last moments, proofs of his esteem and affection. When he had settled his affairs, he begged to be left alone for some time. Between twelve and one his bell rang, and he desired to see Lady Leonora and me. He spoke to me with that warmth of friendship, which he has ever felt from our childhood. Then turning to his wife, his voice utterly failed, and he could only press to his lips that hand, which was held out to him in speechless agony.

"Excellent woman!" he articulated at last; then collecting his mind, he exclaimed, "My beloved Leonora, I will not die without expressing my feelings for you; I know yours for me. I do not ask for that forgiveness which your generous heart granted long before I deserved it. Your affection for me has been shown by actions, at the hazard of your life; I can only thank you with weak words. You possess my whole heart, my esteem, my admiration, my gratitude."

Lady Leonora, at the word *gratitude*, made an effort to speak, and laid her hand upon her husband's lips. He added, in a more enthusiastic tone, "You have my undivided love. Believe in the truth of these words—perhaps they are the last I may ever speak."

My friend sunk back exhausted, and I carried his wife out of the room.

I returned half an hour ago, and found every thing silent: Mr. L—— is lying with his eyes closed—quite still—I hope asleep. This may be a favourable crisis. I cannot delay this letter longer.

Your Grace's faithful servant. J. B.

LETTER CIX. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Richmond, April 17th.

"Say is not absence death to those that love?"

How just, how beautiful a sentiment! yet cold and callous is that heart, which knows not that there is a pang more dreadful than absence; far as the death of lingering torture exceeds, in corporeal sufferance, the soft slumber of expiring

nature. Suspense! suspense! compared with thy racking agony, even absence is but the blessed euthanasia of love.

My dearest L——, why this torturing silence? One line, one word, I beseech you, from *your own hand*; say but *I live and love you, my Olivia.* Hour after hour, and day after day have I waited and waited, and hoped, and feared to hear from you. O this intolerable agonizing suspense! Yet hope clings to my fond heart—Hope! sweet treacherous Hope!

"Non so si la Speranza
"Va con l'inganno unita;
"So che mantiene in vita
"Qualche infelici almen."

OLIVIA.

LETTER CX. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

DEAREST MOTHER, April 19, —.

HE has slept several hours.—Even Dr. H——, the most desponding of all his physicians, says that we may now expect his recovery. Adieu. The good General will add a line to assure you that I am not deceived, nor too sanguine.

Yours most affectionately, LEONORA L——.

Postscript by General B——.

I have some hopes.

LETTER CXI. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Yarmouth
DEAREST MOTHER, April 25, —.

EXCELLENT news for you to-day!—Mr. L—— is pronounced out of danger. He seems excessively touched by my coming here, and so grateful for the little kindness I have been able to show him during his illness! But, alas! that fatal promise! the recollection of it comes across my mind like a spectre. Mr. L—— has never touched upon this subject,—I do all in my power to divert his thoughts to indifferent objects.

This morning, when I went into his room, I found him tearing to pieces that note which I mentioned to you a few days ago. He seemed much agitated, and desired to see General B——. They are now together, and were talking so loud in the next room to me, that I was obliged to retire, lest I should overhear secrets. Mr. L—— this moment sends for me. If I should not have time to add more, this short letter will satisfy you for to-day. LEONORA L——.

I open my letter to say, that I am not so happy as I was when I began it. I have heard all the circumstances relative to this terrible promise, and I see no hope. Mr. L—— must go to Russia with Lady Olivia. He is bound by a solemn promise. I am as far from happiness as ever.

LETTER CXII. MR. L—— TO OLIVIA.

Yarmouth.

MY DEAR OLIVIA, April 25, —.

This is the first line I have written since my illness. I could not sooner relieve you from suspense, for during most of this time I have been delirious, and never till now able to write. My physicians have this morning pronounced me out of danger; and as soon as my strength is sufficient to bear the voyage, I shall sail, according to my promise.

Your prudence or that of your physicians, have saved me much anxiety—perhaps saved me my life: for had you been so rash as to come hither, beside my fears for your safety, I should have been exposed, in the moment of my returning reason, to a conflict of passions which I could not have borne.

Leonora is with me; she arrived the night after I was taken ill, and forced her way to me, when my fever was at the highest, and while I was in a state of delirium.

Lady Leonora will stay with me till the moment I sail, which I expect to do in about ten days. I cannot say positively, for I am still very weak, and may not be able to keep my word to a day. Adieu. I hope your mind will now be at ease. I am glad to hear from the surgeon that your wound is quite closed. I will write again, and more fully, when I am better able. Believe me, Olivia, I am most anxious to secure your happiness: allow me to believe that this will be in the power of

Yours sincerely, F. L.

LETTER CXIII. OLIVIA TO MR. L——.

Richmond.

Barbarous man! with what cold cruelty you plunge a dagger into my heart! Leonora is with you!—Leonora! Then I am undone. Yes, she will—she has resumed all her power, her rights, her habitual empire over your heart. Wretched Olivia!—But you say it is your wish to secure my happiness, you bid me allow you to believe it is in your power. What phrases!—You will sail, *according to your promise*.—Then nothing but your honour binds you to Olivia. And even now,

at this guilty instant, in your secret soul, you wish, you expect from my offended pride, from my disgusted delicacy, a renunciation of this promise, a release from all the ties that bind you to me. You are right: this is what I ought to do; what I would do, if love had not so weakened my soul, so prostrated my spirit, rendered me so abject a creature, that *I cannot*, what *I would*.

I must love on—female pride and resentment call upon me in vain. I cannot hate you. Even by the feeble tie, which I see you long to break, I must hold, rather than let you go for ever. I will not renounce your promise. I claim it. I adjure you by all which a man of honour holds most sacred, to quit England the moment your health will allow you to sail. No equivocating with your conscience!—I hold you to your word. Oh, my dearest L——! to feel myself reduced to use such language to you, to find myself clinging to that last resource of shipwrecked love, *a promise!* It is with unspeakable agony I feel all this; lower I cannot sink in misery. Raise me, if indeed you wish my happiness—raise me! it is yet in your power. Tell me, that my too susceptible heart has mistaken phantoms for realities—tell me, that your last was not colder than usual—yes, I am ready to be deceived. Tell me that it was only the languor of disease; assure me that my rival forced her way only to your presence, that she has not won her easy way back to your heart—assure me that you are impatient once more to see your own. OLIVIA.

LETTER CXIV. MRS. C—— TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

Yarmouth, April 28, —.

YOUR Grace is very kind to write to me in my banishment: I wonder how you can think of me when your mind must be so anxious about Lady Leonora. Her health has not suffered by her attendance upon her husband. I begin to have faith in the power of mind over body in preventing the approach of disease. The spells of a resolute soul seem sometimes to bid defiance to danger. Leonora in all situations surpasses even my expectations; but to her the greatest instances of generosity are so easy and natural, that she is surprised by the admiration which she excites.

Mr. L——'s fever has brought me into some charity with him; for he has been not only desperately ill, but desperately penitent. I begin to feel some mercy; but before I think of liking him, I must see how he behaves about this embassy to Russia. I hear that he is bound by some promise.—Nonsense! If more evil would accrue from keeping this promise, than from breaking it, would it not be criminal to abide by his

word? Besides, no man can be bound by an unlawful oath; or ought, against his better judgment, to be compelled by a rash promise to do wrong—a promise extorted by the fear that another would commit suicide if it were not granted—a compulsatory promise! I cannot put all this logically to Mr. L——'s understanding, nor am I casuist enough to make out a case of conscience: but if your Grace would write to Mr. L——, you would make the matter perfectly clear; and you could infuse into him a portion of your own strength of mind. Let me entreat your Grace to write immediately, for he talks of sailing the moment he is well; and I am afraid he will be well in a few days.

Believe me to be, my dear Madam, your Grace's sincerely attached HELEN C——.

LETTER CXV. LEONORA TO HER MOTHER.

Yarmouth.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, May 6, —.

CAN you believe or imagine, that I am actually unwilling to say or to think, that my husband is quite well?—yet this is the fact. Such is the inconsistency and weakness of our natures—of my nature I should say. But a short time ago I thought that no evil could be so great as his danger; now, that danger is past, I dread to hear him say, that he is perfectly recovered. The moment he is able he goes to Russia; that is decided irrevocably. The promise has been claimed and repeated. A solemn promise cannot be broken for any human consideration. I should despise him if he broke it; but can I love him for keeping it? His mind is at this instant agitated as much as mine is: more it cannot. Yet I ought to be better able to part with him now, than when we parted before; because I have now at least the consolation of knowing, that he leaves me against his will; that his heart will not go from me. This time I cannot be deceived; I have had the most explicit assurance of his *undivided* love. And indeed, I was never deceived. You recollect that all the appearances of regret at parting with me were genuine. The General witnessed the consequent struggle in Mr. L——'s mind, and this fever followed.

I will endeavour to calm and content myself with the possession of his love, and with the assurance that he will return to me as soon as possible. As soon as possible! but what a vague hope! He sails with the first fair wind. What a dreadful certainty! Perhaps to-morrow! Oh, my dearest mother, perhaps to-night! LEONORA L——.

LETTER CXVI. GENERAL B—— TO THE DUCHESS OF——.

Yarmouth,
May 10, —.

MY DEAR MADAM,

To-day Mr. L——, finding himself sufficiently recovered, gave orders to all his suite to embark, and the wind being fair, determined to go on board immediately. In the midst of the bustle of the preparations for his departure, Lady Leonora, exhausted by her former activity, and unable to take any part in what was passing, sat silent, pale and motionless, opposite to a window, which looked out upon the sea; the vessel in which her husband was to sail lay in sight, and her eyes were fixed upon the streamers, watching their motion in the wind.

Mr. L—— was in his own apartment writing letters. An express arrived; and among other letters for the English embassador to Russia, there was a large packet directed to Lady Leonora L——. Upon opening it, the crimson colour flew into her face, and she exclaimed, "Olivia's letters!—Lady Olivia ——'s letters to Madame de P——. Who could send these to me?" "I give you joy with all my heart!" cried I, "no matter how they come—they come in the most fortunate moment possible. I would stake my life upon it they will unmask Olivia at once. Where is Mr. L——? He must read them this moment."

I was hurrying out of the room to call my friend, but Lady Leonora stopped my career, and checked the transport of my joy.

"You do not think, my dear General," said she, "that I would for any consideration do so dishonourable an action as to read these letters?"

"Only let Mr. L—— read them," interrupted I, "that is all I ask of your ladyship. Give them to me. For the soul of me I can see nothing dishonourable in this. Let Lady Olivia be judged by her own words. Your ladyship shall not be troubled with her trash, but give the letters to me, I beseech you."

"No, I cannot," said Lady Leonora, steadily. "It is a great temptation; but I ought not to yield." She deliberately folded them up in a blank cover, directed them to Lady Olivia, and sealed them; whilst I, half in admiration and half in anger, went on expostulating.

"Good God! this is being too generous! But, my dear Lady Leonora, why will you sacrifice yourself? This is misplaced delicacy! Show those letters, and I'll lay my life Mr. L—— never goes to Russia."

"My dear friend," said she, looking up with tears in her eyes, "do not tempt me beyond my power to resist. Say no

more." At this instant Mr. L—— came into the room; and I am ashamed to confess to your Grace, I really was so little master of myself, that I was upon the point of seizing Olivia's letters, and putting them into his hands. "L——," said I, "here is your admirable wife absurdly, yes, I must say it, absurdly standing upon a point of honour with one who has none! That packet which she has before her....."

Lady Leonora imposed silence upon me by one of those looks which no man can resist.

"My dear Leonora, you are right," said Mr. L——; "and you are almost right, my dear General; I know what that packet contains; and without doing any thing dishonourable, I hold myself absolved from my promise; I shall not go to Russia, my dearest wife!" He flew into her arms—and I left them. I question whether they either of them felt much more than I did.

For some minutes I was content with knowing that these things had really happened, that I had heard Mr. L—— say he was absolved from all promises, and that he would not go to Russia; but how did all this happen so suddenly?—How did he know the contents of Olivia's letters, and without doing any thing dishonourable? There are some people who cannot be perfectly happy till they know the *rationale* of their happiness. I am one of these. I did not feel "a sober certainty of waking bliss," till I read a letter which Mr. L—— received by the same express that brought Olivia's letters, and which he read while we were debating. I beg your Grace's pardon if I am too minute in explanation; but I do as I would be done by. The letter was from one of the private secretaries, who is, I understand, a relation and friend of Lady Leonora L——. As the original goes this night to Lady Olivia, I send your Grace a copy. You will give me credit for copying, and at such a time as this! I congratulate your Grace, and

I have the honour to be, &c. J. B.

LETTER CXVII. TO MR. L——.

[Private.]

London, St. James's street.

MY DEAR SIR, May 9, —.

In the same moment you receive this, your lady, for whom I have the highest regard, will receive from me a valuable present, a packet of Lady Olivia ——'s letters to one of her French friends. These letters were lately found in a French frigate, taken by one of our cruisers; and, as *intercepted cor-*

respondence is the order of the day, these, with all the despatches on board, were transmitted to our office to be examined, in hopes of making reprisals of state secrets. The examination fortunately fell to my lot, as private secretary; and as these papers contain only family secrets, I obtained permission to send them to Lady Leonora L——, to ensure the triumph of virtue over vice; to put it into her ladyship's power completely to unmask her unworthy rival. These letters will show you by what arts you have been deceived. You will find yourself ridiculed as *a cold awkward Englishman*; one who will *hottentot again, whatever pains may be taken to civilize him; a man of ice*, to be taken as a lover from *pure charity*, or *pure curiosity*, or the pure *besoin d'aimer*. Here are many pure motives, of which you will, my dear Sir, take your choice. You will further observe in one of her letters, that Lady Olivia premeditated the design of prevailing with you to carry her to Russia, that she might show her power *to that proudest of earthly prudes*, the Duchess of ***, and that she might *gratify her great revenge against Lady Leonora L——*.

Sincerely hoping, my dear Sir, that these letters may open your eyes, and restore you and my amiable relation to domestic happiness, I make no apology for the liberty I take, and cannot regret the momentary pain I may inflict. You are at liberty to make what use you think proper of this letter.

I have it in command from my Lord ——— to add, that if your health, or any other circumstances, should render this embassy to Russia less desirable to you than it appeared some time ago, other arrangements can be made, and another friend of government is ready to supply your place.

I am, my dear Sir, yours, &c. ———.

To F. L—— Esq. &c.

LETTER CXVIII. MR. L—— TO OLIVIA.

Yarmouth, May 11.

If the motives attributed to your ladyship, and the expressions quoted in the enclosed letter, should not be accurately stated, your ladyship will permit me to compare them with the originals; but under the persuasion that this permission cannot be granted, I return the packet which the fortune of war has put into my power; neither Lady Leonora L——, to whom it was addressed, nor I, have opened any of these letters.

The quotations from them are sufficient; and your ladyship will not be surprised at my now declining to go to Russia. My conscience is at ease, as I hope yours may be,

Olivia; as far as I am concerned let it be perfectly tranquil; for, permit me to assure you, that the mortification which my vanity has suffered was but momentary; the time when this could have given serious pain to my heart has been long since past; a confession which I may now make without scruple. I have to return your ladyship thanks for showing me what, if I had not been blinded by self-love, I might have sooner discovered, that your happiness is totally independent of me, and of my affection. I am still further obliged to your ladyship, for recalling my understanding to the conviction of truths, which nothing but the fascination of your charms could have made me forget. You have completely convinced me, that the character of a sober, or, if you please, a cold Englishman, is totally unsuited to exotic systems of gallantry; that he can never find, even in the most polished intercourse which they can boast, a compensation for the loss of domestic happiness, and of that self-esteem which his principles or his prejudices connect with a different mode of conduct. As your ladyship justly observes, whatever pains you take with an Englishman he will *hottentot* again.

Wishing that your ladyship may never in future waste your superior talents upon such unworthy subjects, and hoping that you may enjoy the satisfaction of having secured to one of your numerous admirers permanent happiness,

I remain your Ladyship's most obedient and humble servant. F. L.

LETTER CXIX. TO THE DUCHESS OF ——.

Yarmouth, May 11. —.

Joy! joy! joy!—Dearest mother, I cannot write to-day.—Helen must.

Continued by Mrs. C.

Helen must write!—Yes, truly! as if Helen's head could not be turned with joy as well as another's. But in times of general rejoicing somebody must do the necessary business of life; and what so necessary as to give our friends a share of our happiness!—Your Grace, the dear mother of Leonora, has the first claim. Briefly then—

Mr. L—— has recovered common sense and his liberty—*heureusement!*

Lady Olivia is unmasked—by her own hand.

Lady Leonora L—— is made the happiest of women—by her own virtues.

Mr. L—— has given up the Russian embassy, and I begin to love him a little. We shall all go home together to-morrow. By *home* I mean L—— Castle, and by *all* I mean to include the General. He has obtained a longer leave of absence. By the bye, he tells me that I am charming—Would your Grace advise me to believe it?—And if he should swear? ——Your Grace may safely venture to give me your advice, for I can assure you I did *not* marry him yesterday.

HELEN C——.

LETTER CXX. THE DUCHESS OF —— TO LADY LEONORA L——.

June 1, —.

MY beloved daughter, pride and delight of your happy mother's heart! I give you joy. Your temper, fortitude and persevering affection, have now their just reward. Enjoy your happiness, heightened as it must be by the sense of self-approbation, and the sympathy of all who know you. And now let me indulge the vanity of a mother; let me exult in the accomplishment of my prophecies, and let me be listened to with due humility, when I prophesy again. With as much certainty as I foretold what is now present, I foresee, my child, your future destiny. I predict that you will preserve while you live your husband's fondest affections; I predict that your prudence will prevent you from indulging too far your taste for retirement, or for the exclusive society of your intimate friends. You will be aware that in an unchanged atmosphere the flame of love fades and expires; that in a purer element than ordinary its brilliancy is increased, but at the expense of its duration. You will mix with the world, my dear daughter, even now, when your heart is occupied by increased affection: even though the company you meet may be inferior in moral or intellectual excellence, yet it will ultimately be advantageous; you will return with more zest to the society most dear to you; its value you will find increased by temporary privation, and by extensive comparisons. You will spend your winters in London: your rank, your fortune, and I may be permitted to add, your character, manners and abilities, give you the power of drawing round you persons of the best information and of the highest talents—all that the arts, belles lettres and science can boast. You will continue to cultivate your excellent understanding. By the commerce of conversation your mental riches will daily increase; and your good taste will show all the elegance, without displaying the ostentation, of intellectual wealth. Your husband will find, in the society you may form, every thing that can attach him

to his home; and in you, his most rational friend and his most charming companion.

Is there any temerity in prophesying, that such a wife will for ever retain the fondest affections of her husband? And are not these, the natural means you will use, adequate to the effect, and superior to all the spells and amulets that ever witchcraft imposed upon love-sick fancy? For the good and wise there is in love a power unknown to the ignorant and the vicious, a power of communicating fresh energy to all the faculties of the soul, of exalting them to the highest state of perfection.

The friendship which in time succeeds to such love is perhaps the greatest, and certainly the most permanent blessing of life.

An admirable German writer—you shall see, my dear, that I have no prejudices against good German writers—an admirable German writer says, that "Love is like the morning shadows, which diminish as the day advances; but friendship is like the shadows of the evening, which increase even till the setting of the sun."

Adieu, my beloved daughter. I am told that Lady Olivia —— is going to the continent, and that she declares it to be her resolution never to return to England. She is in the right. England is not the place for women of her character.

Happy the climate in which no venomous creature can exist! More happy the country under whose salutary laws and opinions no exotic vice can flourish. ———.

END OF LEONORA.

ESSAY

ON

IRISH BULLS.

BY

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH, F.R.S. and M.R.I.A.

AND

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO THE READER.

When authors receive any degree of encouragement from the public, it should incite them to increasing diligence: a third edition of the Essay on Irish Bulls has been called for, and the authors of this Essay have taken pains to correct and *shorten* it.

Edgeworth's Town,
Sept. 1807.

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ESSAY

ON

IRISH BULLS.

Summos posse viros, et magna exempla daturos,
Verveçum in patria, crassoque sub aere nasci !

Juvenal.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT mortal, what fashionable mortal, is there, who has not, in the midst of a formidable circle, been reduced to the embarrassment of having nothing to say ? Who is there, that has not felt those oppressive fits of silence, which ensue after the weather, and the fashions, and the politics, and the scandal, and all the common-place topics of the day have been utterly exhausted ? Who is there, that, at such a time, has not tried in vain to call up an idea, and found that *none would come when they did call*—or that all that came were impertinent, and must be rejected, some as too grave, others too gay, some too vulgar, some too refined for the hearers, some relating to persons, others to circumstances, that must not be mentioned ?—Not one will do !—and all this time the silence lasts, and the difficulty of breaking it increases every instant in an incalculable proportion.

Let it be some comfort to those whose polite sensibility has laboured under such distress, to be assured, that they need never henceforward fear to be reduced to similar dilemmas. They may be ensured for ever against such dangers, at the slight premium, and upon the easy condition of perusing the following little volume. It will satisfy them that there is a subject, which still affords inexhausted and inexhaustible sources of conversation, suited to all tastes, all ranks, all individu-

als, democratic, aristocratic, commercial, or philosophic; suited to every company which can be combined, purposely or fortuitously, in this great metropolis, or in any of the most remote parts of England, Wales, or Scotland. There is a subject which dilates the heart of every true Briton, which relaxes his muscles, however rigid, to a smile, which opens his lips, however closed, to conversation. There is a subject, "which frets another's spleen to cure our own"—and which makes even the angelic part of the creation *laugh themselves mortal.* For who can forbear to laugh at the bare idea of an Irish bull?

Nor let any one apprehend, that this subject can ever become trite and vulgar. Custom cannot stale its infinite variety. It is in the main obvious, and palpable enough for every common understanding; yet it leads to disquisitions of exquisite subtlety, it branches into innumerable ramifications, and involves consequences of surprising importance; it may exercise the ingenuity of the subtlest wit, the fancy of the oddest humourist, the imagination of the finest poet, and the judgment of the most profound metaphysician. Moreover this happy subject is enveloped in all that doubt and confusion, which are so favourable to the reputation of disputants, and which secures the glorious possibility of talking incessantly, without being stopped short by a definition or a demonstration. For much as we have all heard and talked of Irish bulls, it has never yet been decided what it is that constitutes a bull—*Incongruity of ideas*, says one. But this supposition touches too closely upon the definition of wit, which according to the best authorities, Locke, Burke, and Stewart, consists in an unexpected assemblage of ideas, apparently discordant, but in which some point of resemblance or aptitude is suddenly discovered.

Then, perhaps, says another, the essence of a bull lies in *confusion of ideas.*—This sounds plausible in theory, but it will not apply in practice; for confusion of ideas is common to both countries: for instance, was there not some slight confusion of ideas in the mind of that English student, who, when he was asked what progress he had made in the study of medicine, replied, "I hope I shall soon be qualified to be a physician, for I think I am now able to cure a child?"

To amend our bill, suppose we insert the word laughable, and say that *a laughable confusion of ideas* constitutes a bull. But have not we a laughable confusion of ideas in our English poet Blackmore's famous lines in prince Arthur?—

> "A painted vest prince Vortigern had on,
> "Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won."

We are sensible that to many people the most vulgar Irish bull would appear more laughable merely from its being Irish,

therefore we cannot make the propensity to laughter in one man the criterion of what is ridiculous in another; though we have a precedent for this mode of judging in the laws of England, which are allowed to be the perfection of human reason. If a man swear, that his neighbour has put him in bodily fear, he may have the cause of his terror sent to jail; thus the feelings of the plaintiff become the measure of the defendant's guilt. As we cannot extend this convenient principle to all matters of taste, and all subjects of risibility, we are still compelled to acknowledge, that no accurate definition of a bull has yet been given. The essence of an Irish bull must be of the most ethereal nature, for notwithstanding the most indefatigable research it has hitherto escaped from analysis. The crucible always breaks in the long expected moment of projection: we have nevertheless the courage to recommence the process in a new mode. Perhaps by ascertaining what it is not, we may at last discover what it is: we must distinguish the genuine from the spurious, the original from all imitations, the indigenous from the exotic; in short it must be determined in what an Irish bull essentially differs from a blunder, or in what Irish blunders specifically differ from English blunders, and from those of all other nations. To elucidate these points, or to prove to the satisfaction of all competent judges, that they are beyond the reach of the human understanding, is the object of the following *Essay concerning the nature of Bulls and Blunders.*

CHAPTER I.

ORIGINALITY OF IRISH BULLS EXAMINED.

The difficulty of selecting from the vulgar herd of Irish bulls one, that shall be entitled to the prize, from the united merits of pre-eminent absurdity, and indisputable originality, is greater than hasty judges may imagine. Many bulls reputed to be bred and born in Ireland, are of foreign extraction; and many more, supposed to be unrivalled in their kind, may be matched in all their capital *points:* for instance, there is not a more celebrated bull than Paddy Blake's. When Paddy heard an English gentleman speaking of the fine echo at the lake of Killarney, which repeats the sound forty times, he very promptly observed,—" Faith that's nothing at all to the echo in my father's garden, in the county of Galway; if you say to it—' How do you do, Paddy Blake ?' it will answer, ' Pretty well I thank you, sir.' "

Now this echo of Paddy Blake's, which has long been the admiration of the world, is not a prodigy *unique* in its kind; it can be matched by one recorded in the immortal works of the great lord Verulam.*

"I remember well," says this father of philosophy, "that when I went to the echo at port Charenton, there was an old Parisian that took it to be the work of spirits, and of good spirits; 'for,' said he, 'call Satan, and the echo will not deliver back the devil's name, but will say, 'Va t'en.'"

The Parisian echo is surely superior to the Hibernian! Paddy Blake's simply understood and practised the common rules of good breeding; but the Port Charenton echo is "instinct with spirit," and endowed with a nice moral sense.

Amongst the famous bulls recorded by the illustrious Joe Miller, there is one which has been continually quoted as an example of original Irish genius.—An English gentleman was writing a letter in a coffee-house, and perceiving that an Irishman stationed behind him was taking that liberty which Parmenio used with his friend Alexander, instead of putting his seal upon the lips of the *curious impertinent*, the English gentleman thought proper to reprove the Hibernian, if not with delicacy, at least with poetical justice: he concluded writing his letter in these words: "I would say more, but a damned tall Irishman is reading over my shoulder every word I write." "You lie, you scoundrel," said the self-convicted Hibernian.

This blunder is unquestionably excellent; but it is not originally Irish: it comes with other riches from the east, as the reader may find by looking into a book by M. Galland, entitled, "THE REMARKABLE SAYINGS OF THE EASTERN NATIONS."

"A learned man was writing to a friend; a troublesome fellow was beside him, who was looking over his shoulder at what he was writing—The learned man, who perceived this, continued writing in these words 'If an impertinent chap, who stands beside me, were not looking at what I write, I would write many other things to you, which should be known only to you and to me.'

"The troublesome fellow, who was reading on, now thought it incumbent upon him to speak, and said, 'I swear to you, that I have not read or looked at what you are writing.'

"The learned man replied, 'Blockhead as you are, why then do you say to me what you are now saying?'"†

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* Natural History, Century III, p. 191.—*Bacon produces it to show, that echoes will not readily return the letter S.*

† "Un savant écrivoit à un ami, & un importun étoit à côté de lui qui regardoit par dessus lépaule ce qu'il écrivoit. Le savant qui s'en appergut écrivit ceci à la place: Si un impertinent qui est à mon côté ne regardoit pas ce

Making allowance for the difference of manners in eastern and northern nations, there is, certainly, such a similarity between this oriental anecdote and Joe Miller's story, we may conclude, that the latter is stolen from the former. Now, an *Irish* bull must be a species of blunder *peculiar* to Ireland; those that we have hitherto examined, though they may be called Irish bulls by the ignorant vulgar, have no right, title, or claim to such a distinction. We should invariably exclude from that class all blunders, which can be found in another country. For instance, a speech of the celebrated Irish beauty, lady C——, has been called a bull; but as a parallel can be produced in a speech of an English nobleman, *it tells for nothing*. When her ladyship was presented at court, his majesty, George the Second, politely hoped, "that, since her arrival in England, she had been entertained with the gayeties of London."

"O yes, please your majesty, I have seen every sight in London, worth seeing, except a coronation."

This naivete is certainly not equal to that of the English Earl Marshal, who, when his king found fault with some arrangement at his coronation, said—"Please your majesty, I hope it will be better next time."

A naivete of the same species entailed a heavy tax upon the inhabitants of Beaune, in France. Beaune is famous for burgundy; and Henry the Fourth, passing through his kingdom, stopped there, and was well entertained by his loyal subjects. His majesty praised the burgundy which they sat before him—"It was excellent! it was admirable!"

"O, sire!" cried they, "do you think this excellent? *we have much finer* burgundy than this."

"Have you so? then you can afford to pay for it," replied Harry the Fourth; and he laid a double tax thenceforward upon the burgundy of Beaune.

Of the same class of blunders is the following speech, which we actually heard not long ago from an Irishman:—

"Please your worship he sent me to the devil, and I came straight to your honour."

We thought this an original Irish blunder, till we recollected its prototype in Marmontel's Annette and Lubin. Lubin

---

que j'écris, je vous écrirois encore plusieurs choses qui ne doivent être sues que de vous & de moi. L'importun qui lisoit toujours prit la parole et dit: 'Je vous jure que je n'ai regardé ni lû ce que vous écrivois.' Le savant repartit. 'Ignorant que vous êtes, pourquoi me dites-vous donc ce que vous dites?"

Les Paroles remarquables des Orientaux—traduction de leurs ouvrages en Arabe, en Persan, & en Turc, (suivant la copie imprimée à Paris) à la Haye, chez Louis & Henry Vandole, marchand libraires, dans le Pooten, à l'enseigne du Port Royal, M. DC. XCIV.

concludes his harangue with, "The bailiff sent us to the devil, and we come to put ourselves under your protection, my lord."*

The French, at least in former times, were celebrated for politeness; yet we meet with a *naïve* compliment of a Frenchman, which would have been accounted a bull if it had been found in Ireland.

A gentleman was complimenting madame Denis on the manner in which she had just acted Zara.—"To act that part," said she, "a person should be young, and handsome." "Ah, madam!" replied the complimenter *naïvement*, "you are a complete proof of the contrary."†

We know not any original Irish blunders superior to this unless it be that which lord Orford pronounced to be the best bull, that he ever heard.

"I hate that woman," said a gentleman, looking at one who had been his nurse, "I hate that woman, for she changed me at nurse."

Lord Orford particularly admires this bull, because in the confusion of the blunderer's ideas he is not clear even of his personal identity. Philosophers will not perhaps be so ready as his lordship has been to call this a blunder of the first magnitude. Those who have never been initiated into the mysteries of metaphysics, may have the presumptuous ignorance to fancy, that they understand what is meant by the common words *I* or *me*; but the able metaphysician knows better than lord Orford's changeling, how to prove to our satisfaction that we know nothing of the matter.

"Personal identity," says Locke, "consists not in the identity of substance, but in the identity of consciousness, wherein Socrates and the present mayor of Quinborough agree, they are the same person; if the same Socrates, sleeping and waking, do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same person, and to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more of right than to punish one twin for what his brother twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides are so like that they could not be distinguished; for such twins have been seen."‡

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* "Le bailli nous donne au diable, et nous nous recommandons à vous, monseigneur."

† On faisoit compliment à madame Denis de la façon dont elle venoit de jouer Zaïre

"Il faudroit," dit elle, "être belle et jeune."—"Ah madame!" reprit le complimenteur naïvement, "vous êtes bien la preuve du contraire."

‡ Locke's Essay concerning the Human Understanding, 15th edition vol. 1, p. 292.

We may presume that our Hibernian's consciousness could not retrograde to the time when he was changed at nurse; consequently there was no continuity of identity between the infant and the man who expressed his hatred of the nurse for perpetrating the fraud. At all events the confusion of identity, which excited lord Orford's admiration in our Hibernian, is by no means unprecedented in France, England, or ancient Greece, and consequently it cannot be an instance of national idiosyncracy, or an Irish bull. We find a similar blunder in Spain, in the time of Cervantes;—

"Pray tell me, squire," says the duchess in Don Quixote, "is not your master the person whose history is printed under the name of the sage Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha, who professes himself the admirer of one Dulcinea del Toboso?"

"The very same, my lady," answered Sancho; "and I myself am that very squire of his, who is mentioned or ought to be mentioned in that history, *unless they have changed me in the cradle.*"

In Moliere's Amphitrion there is a dialogue between Mercure and Socie, evidently taken from the *attic* Lucian. Socie being completely puzzled out of his personal identity, if not out of his senses, says literally, "of my being myself I begin to doubt in good earnest; yet when I feel myself, and when I recollect myself, it seems to me that *I am I.*"*

We see that the puzzle about identity proves at last to be of Grecian origin. It is really edifying to observe how those things, which have long been objects of popular admiration, shrink and fade when exposed to the light of strict examination. An experienced critic proposed, that a work should be written to inquire into the pretensions of modern writers to original invention, to trace their thefts, and to restore the property to the ancient owners. Such a work would require powers and erudition beyond what can be expected from any ordinary individual; the labour must be shared amongst numbers, and we are proud to assist in ascertaining the rightful property even of bulls and blunders: though without pretending, like some literary blood-hounds, to follow up a plagiarism, where common sagacity is at a fault.

---

* "De moi je commence à douter tout de bon.
"Pourtant quand je me tâte, & quand je me rappelle,
"Il me semble que je suis moi."

CHAPTER II.

IRISH NEWSPAPERS.

We presume that we have successfully disputed the claims imposed upon the public, in behalf of certain spurious, alien blunders, pretending to be native, original Irish bulls; and we shall now with pleasure proceed to examine those which have better titles to notice. Even nonsense ceases to be worthy of attention and public favour, unless it be original.

"Dear lady Emily," says miss Allscrip, in the excellent comedy of the Heiress—"Dear lady Emily, don't you doat upon folly?"

"To ecstacy!" replies her ladyship, "I only despair of seeing it well kept up."

We flatter ourselves "there is no great danger of that," for we have the Irish newspapers before us, where, no doubt, we shall find a fresh harvest of indigenous absurdity ripe for the sickle.

The first advertisement that meets our eye is promising.

It is the late proclamation of an Irish mayor, in which we are informed, that certain business is to be transacted in that city "every Monday, (Easter Sunday only excepted.") This seems rather an unnecessary exception; but it is not an inadvertency, caused by any hurry of business in his worship, it is deliberately copied from a precedent set in England, by a baronet formerly well known in parliament; who, in the preamble to a bill, proposed, that certain regulations should take place "on every Monday (Tuesday excepted.") We fear also, that an English mayor has been known to blunder.—Some years ago the mayor of a capital English city published a proclamation and advertisement, previous to the races, "that no gentleman will be allowed to ride on the course, but *the horses* that are to run." A mayor's blundering proclamation is not, however, worth half so much in the eye of ridicule, as a lord lieutenant's.

"A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn."

A bull on the throne is worth twice as much as a bull in the chair.

"By the lord lieutenant and council of Ireland.

"A proclamation.

***,

"Whereas the greatest economy is necessary in the consumption of *all species of grain, and, especially in the consumption of potatoes, &c.*

"Given at the council chamber in Dublin."

This is the first time we have been informed, by authority, that potatoes are a species of grain ; but we must accede to this new botanical arrangement, when published under such splendid auspices. The assertion, certainly, is not made in distinct terms, but all who understand the construction of language must imply the conclusion, that we draw from these premises. A general position is in the first member of the sentence laid down, " *that the greatest economy is necessary in the consumption of all species of grain.*" A particular exemplification of the principle is made in the next clause—" *especially in the consumption of potatoes.*"

The inference is as plain as can be made.

The next article in our newspaper is an advertisement of lands to be let to *an improving tenant* :—" A few miles from Cork, in *a most sporting country*, bounded by an *uncommon fine* turf bog, on the verge of which there are a number of fine *lime kilns*, where *that manure* may be had on very moderate terms, the distance for carriage not being many hundred yards. The whole lands being now in great heart, and completely laid down, entirely surrounded and divided by *impenetrable furze ditches, made of quarried stone, laid edgeways.*"

It will be a matter of difficulty to the untravelled English reader, to comprehend how furze ditches can be made of quarried stones laid edgeways, or any way: and we fear that we should only puzzle his intellects still more, if we should attempt to explain to him the mysteries of Irish ditching in the technical terms of the country. With the face of a ditch he may be acquainted, but to *the back* and *gripe*, and bottom of the gripe, and top of the back of a ditch, we fear he is still to be introduced.

We can never sufficiently admire these furze ditches made of quarried stones, they can, indeed, be found only in Ireland : but we have heard in England of things almost as extraordinary. Dr. Grey, in his erudite and entertaining notes on Hudibras, records the deposition of a lawyer, who in an action of battery told the judge, " that the defendant beat his client with a certain *wooden instrument* called *an iron pestle.*" Nay, to go further still, a wise annotator on the Pentateuch, named Peter Harrison, observed of Moses's two *tables of stone*, that they were made of *shittim-wood.* The stone furze ditches are scarcely bolder instances of the catachresis, than the stone tables of shittim-wood. This bold figure of rhetoric in an Irish advertisement of an estate, may lead us to expect, that Hibernian advertisers may, in time, emulate the fame of Christie, the prince of auctioneers, whose fine descriptive powers can make more of an estate on paper, than

ever was made of it in any other shape, except in the form of an ejectment. The fictions of law, indeed, surpass even the auctioneer's imagination; and a man may be said never to know the extent of his own possessions, until he is served with a process of ejectment. He then finds himself required to give up the possession of a multitude of barns, orchards, fish-ponds, horse-ponds, dwelling-houses, pigeon-houses, dove-cotes, out-houses, and appurtenances, which he never saw or heard of, and which are no where to be found upon the surface of the habitable globe; so that we cannot really express this English legal transaction, without being guilty of an Irish bull, and saying, that the person ejected is *ousted* from places which he never entered.

To proceed with our newspapers.—The next advertisement is from a schoolmaster: but we shall not descant upon its grammatical errors, because they are not blunders peculiar to Irish school-masters. We have frequently observed, that the advertisements of school-masters, even in England, are seldom free from solecisms; too much care in writing, it seems, is almost as bad as too little. In the preface of the dictionary of the French academy, there are, as it is computed by an able French critic, no less than sixteen faults; and in Harris, the celebrated grammarian's dedication of his Hermes, there is one bull, and almost as many faults as lines. It appears as if the most precise and learned writers sometimes, like the ladies in one of Congreve's plays, "run into the danger to avoid the apprehension."

After a careful scrutiny of the Hibernian advertisements, we are compelled to confess, that we have not met with any blunders that more nearly resemble our notion of an Irish bull than one, which some years ago appeared in our English papers. It was the title to an advertisement of a washing machine, in these words—"Every *man* his own *washerwoman!*" We have this day, Nov. 19, 1807, seen the following—"This day were published, Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, with a *new edition* of her Poems, some of which have *never* before appeared." And an eye-witness assures us, that lately he saw an advertisement in the following terms, stuck up on the wall of an English coffee-house—"This coffee-house removed up stairs!"

A Roman Emperor used to draw his stairs up after him every night into his bed-chamber, and we have heard of throwing a house out of the windows; but drawing a whole house up into itself is new.

How can we account for such a blunder in an advertisement on the wall of an English coffee-house, except by supposing that it was penned by an Irish waiter? If that were the case

it would be an admirable example of an Irish bull! and therefore, we had best take it for granted.

Let not any conscientious person be startled at the mode of reasoning, by which we have convicted an imaginary Irish waiter of a real bull: it is at least as good, if not better logic, than that which was successfully employed in the time of the *popish plot*, to convict an Irish physician of forgery. The matter is thus recorded by l'Estrange. The Irish physician "was charged with writing a treasonable libel, but denied the thing, and appealed to the unlikeness of the characters. It was agreed, that there was no resemblance at all in the hands; but asserted that the doctor had two hands, his *physic hand*, and his *plot hand*, and the one not a jot like the other. Now this was the doctor's plot hand, and it was insisted that because it was not like one of his hands, it must be like the other."

By this convenient mode of reasoning, an Irishman may at any time be convicted of any crime, or of any absurdity.

But what have we next in our newspaper—"Murder, Robbery, and Reward."—This seems a strange connexion of things, according to our vulgar notions of distributive justice; but we are told that the wicked shall have their *reward* even in this world, and we suppose it is upon this principle, that over the stocks in a town in Ireland there appears this inscription—"A reward for vagabonds."

Upon proceeding further in our advertisement, which begins with "Murder, Robbery, and Reward," we find however, that contrary to the just expectations raised by the title, the reward is promised not to the robbers and murderers, but to those who shall discover and prosecute them to conviction. Here we were led into error by that hasty mode of elision, which sometimes obtains in the titles even of our English law processes; as, sci-fa, fi-fa, qui-tam, &c.; names which, to preserve the glorious uncertainty of the law, never refer to the sense, but to the first words of the writs.

In our newspaper a formidable list of unanimous resolutions of various committees and corps succeeds to the advertisement of murder, robbery, and reward; and we have, at the close of each day's business, thanksgivings in various formulas for the very proper, upright, or spirited behaviour of our worthy, gallant, or respected chairman. Now that a man may behave properly, or sit uprightly in a chair, we can readily comprehend; but what are we to understand by a *spirited* behaviour in a chair? Perhaps it alludes to the famous duel fought by a gouty Irish gentleman in his armchair. As the gallant chairman actually in that position shot his adversary, it behoves us to *understand* the meaning of spirited behaviour in the chair.

We may, however, venture to hint, fas est et ab hoste dóceri, that in the publications of corps and commitees, this formula should be omitted—" Resolved *unanimously*, (with only *one* dissentient voice.") Here the obloquy meant to rest on the one dissentient voice, unfortunately falls upon the publishers of the disgrace, exposing them to the ridicule of resolving an Irish bull. If this be a bull however, we are concerned to find, it is matched by that of the government of Munich, who published a catalogue of forbidden books, and afterwards, under heavy penalties, forbade the reading of the catalogue. But this might be done in the hurry, occasioned by the just dread of revolutionary principles.

What shall we say for the blunder of a French academician, in a time of profound peace, who gave it as his opinion, that nothing should be read in the public sittings of the academy " par dela ce qui est imposé par les statuts : il motivait son avis en disant—En fait *d'inutilités* il ne faut que *le necessaire.*" If this speech had been made by a member of the Royal Irish Academy, it would have had the honour to be noticed all over England as a bull. *The honour to be noticed* we say, in imitation of the exquisitely polite expression of a correspondent of the English Royal Society, who talks of " the earthquake that had the honour to be noticed by the Royal Society."

It will we fear be long before the Irish emerge so far from barbarism as to write in this style. The Irish are, however, we are happy to observe, making some little approaches to a refined and courtly style; kings, and, in imitation of them, great men, and all who think themselves great—a numerous class—speak and write as much as possible in the plural number, instead of the singular. Instead of *I* they always say *we*, instead of *my—our*, according to the Italian idiom, which flatters this humour so far as to make it a point of indispensable politeness. It is, doubtless, in humble imitation of such illustrious examples, that an Irishman, of the lowest class, when he means to express that he is a member of a committee, says *I am a Committee.* Thus consolidating the power, wisdom and virtue of a whole committee in his own person. Superior even to the Indian, who believes that he shall inherit the powers and virtues of his enemies after he has destroyed them ;* this committee-man takes possession of the faculties of his living friends and associates. When some of the *united men*, as they called themselves, were examined, they frequently answered to the questions, who or what are you ? I am a *committee.*

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* " So Indian murd'rers hope to gain
" The powers and virtues of the slain,
" Of wretches they destroy."

However extraordinary it may at first sound, to hear one man assert that he is a whole committee, it is not more wonderful than that the whole parliament of Bourdeaux should be found in a one horse chair.*

We forbear to descant farther upon Irish committee-men, lest we should call to mind, merely by the similarity of name, the times when England had her committee-men, who were not perfectly free from all tinge of absurdity. It is remarkable, that in times of popular ferment, a variety of new terms are coined to serve purposes and passions of the moment. In the days of the English committee-men this practice had risen to such a height, that it was fair game for ridicule. Accordingly Sir John Birkenhead about that time found it necessary to publish "*The Children's Dictionary; an exact Collection of all New Words born since Nov.* 3, 1640, *in Speeches, Prayers, and Sermons, as well those that signify something, as nothing.*" We observe that it has been likewise found necessary to publish in France, *une Dictionnaire néologique*, a dictionary of the new terms adopted since the revolution.

It must be supposed, that during the late disturbances in Ireland, many *cant* terms have been brought into use, which are not yet to be reckoned amongst the acknowledged terms of the country. However absurd these may be, they are not for our purpose proper subjects of animadversion. Some countries have their birds of passage, and some their follies of passage, which it is scarcely worth while to shoot as they fly. It has often been said, that the language of a people is a just criterion of their progress in civilization; but we must not take a specimen of their vocabulary during the immediate prevalence of any transient passion or prejudice. It is to be hoped, that all party barbarisms in language will now be disused and forgotten; for some time has elapsed since we read the following article of country intelligence in a Dublin paper:—

"General ——— scoured the country yesterday, but had not the good fortune to meet with a single rebel."

The author of this paragraph seems to have been a keen sportsman: he regrets the not meeting with a single rebel, as he would the not meeting with a single hare, or partridge: and he justly considers the human biped as fair game, to be hunted down by all who are properly qualified and licensed by government. To the English perhaps it may seem a strange subject of lamentation, that a General could not meet with a single rebel in the county of Wicklow, when they have so lately been informed from the high authority of a noble lord,

* Vide Memoires du Cardinal de Retz.

that Ireland was so disturbed, that whenever he went out, he called as regularly for his pistols as for his hat and gloves. Possibly, however, this was only a figure of speech, like that of bishop Wilkins, who prophesied that the time would come when gentlemen, when they were to go a journey, would call for their wings as regularly as they call for their boots.—We *believe* that the hyperboles of the privy counsellor and the bishop are of equal magnitude.

CHAPTER III.

THE CRIMINAL LAW OF BULLS AND BLUNDERS.

Madame de Sevigné observes, that there are few people sufficiently candid, or sufficiently enlightened, to distinguish, in their judgments of others, between those faults and mistakes which proceed from *manque d'esprit*, and those which arise merely from *manque d'usage*. We cannot appreciate the talents or character of foreigners, without making allowance for their ignorance of our manners, of the idiom of our language, and the multifarious signification of some of our words. A French gentleman, who dined in London in company with the celebrated author of the Rambler, wishing to show him a mark of peculiar respect, drank Dr. Johnson's health in these words :—

" Your health, Mr. Vagabond."

Assuredly no well judging Englishman would undervalue the Frenchman's abilities, because he mistook the meaning of the words Vagabond and Rambler; he would recollect, that in old English and modern French authors vagabond means wanderer, des eaux vagabondes is a phrase far from inelegant. But independently of this consideration no well bred gentleman would put a foreigner out of countenance by openly laughing at such a mistake: he would imitate the politeness of the Frenchman, who, when Dr. Moore said, " I am afraid the expression I have just used is not French," replied, " Non, monsieur—Mais il mérite bien de l'être." It would, indeed, be a great stretch of politeness to extend this to our Irish neighbours: for no Irishism can ever deserve to be anglicised, though so many gallicisms have of late not only been naturalized in England, but even adopted by the most fashionable speakers and writers. The mistaking a feminine for a masculine noun, or a masculine for a feminine, must in all probability have happened to every Englishman, that ever opened his

lips in Paris; yet without losing his reputation for common sense. But when a poor Irish haymaker, who had but just learned a few phrases of the English language by rote, mistook a feminine for a masculine noun, and began his speech in a court of justice with these words—"My lord, I am a poor widow," instead of, "My lord, I am a poor widower," it was sufficient to throw a grave judge and jury into convulsions of laughter. It was formerly in law no murder to kill a *merus Hibernicus*; and it is to this day no offence against good manners to laugh at any of this species. It is of a thousand times more consequence to have the laugh than the argument on our side, as all those know full well, who have any experience in the management of the great or little vulgar. By the common custom and courtesy of England we *have* the laugh on our side: let us keep it by all means. All means are justifiable to obtain a great end, as all great men maintain in practice, if not in theory. We need not in imitating them have any scruples of conscience; we need not apprehend, that to ridicule our Hibernian neighbours unmercifully is unfriendly or ungenerous. Nations, it has been well observed, are never generous in their conduct towards each other. We must follow the common *custom* of nations, where we have no *law* to guide our proceedings. We must therefore carefully continue the laudable practice of ridiculing the blunders, whether real or imaginary, of Irishmen. In conversation, Englishmen are permitted sometimes to blunder, but without ever being called blunderers. It would indeed be an intolerable restraint upon sociable intercourse, if every man were subject to be taxed for each inaccuracy of language—if he were compelled to talk, upon all occasions, as if he were amenable to a star-chamber of criticism, and surrounded by informers.

Much must be allowed in England for the license of conversation; but by no means must this conversation-license be extended to the Irish. If, for instance, at the convivial hour of dinner, when men are not usually intent upon grammatical or mathematical niceties, an Irish gentleman desires him, "who rules his roast" to cut the sirloin of beef *horizontally downwards*, let the mistake immediately be set down in our note-books, and conned over, and got by heart; and let it be repeated to all eternity as a bull. But if an English lady observe, when the candles have long stood unsnuffed, that "those odious long wicks will soon grow up to the cieling," she can be accused only of an error of vision. We conjure our readers to attend to these distinctions in their intercourse with their Hibernian neighbours: it must be done habitually and technically; and we must not listen to what is called reason; we must not enter into any argument, pro or con, but silence every Irish opponent—if we can—with a laugh.

The Abbé Girard, in his accurate work, "Synonymes Francois," makes a *plausible* distinction between *un âne* et *un ignorant*; he says, "On est âne par disposition: on est ignorant par défaut d'instruction."—An ignorant person may certainly, even in the very circumstances which betray his ignorance, evince considerable ability. For instance, the native Indian, who for the first time saw a bottle of porter uncorked, and who expressed great astonishment at the quantity of froth, which he saw burst from the bottle, and much curiosity to know whether it could all be put in again, showed even in his ignorance a degree of capacity, which in different situations might have saved his life, or have made his fortune. In the situation of the poor fisherman, and the great giant of smoke, who issued from the small vessel, well known to all versed in the Arabian Tales, such acuteness would have saved his life; and a similar spirit of inquiry, applied to chemistry, might, in modern times, have made his fortune. Even where no positive abilities are displayed at the time, by those who manifest ignorance, we should not *(except the culprits be natives of Ireland)* hastily give them up. Ignorance of the most common objects is not only incident to certain situations, but absolutely unavoidable; and the individuals placed in those situations are no more blameable, than they would be for becoming blind in the snows of Lapland, or for having goitres amongst the Cretins of le Vallais. Would you blame the ignorant nuns, who, insensible of the danger of an eruption of Mount Vesuvius,* warmed themselves at the burning lava which flowed up to the windows of their cells? or would you think the French canoness an idiot, who, at the age of fifty, was on account of her health to go out of her convent; and asked, when she met a cow for the first time, what strange animal that was?—or would you think that those poor children deserved to be stigmatized as fools, who, after being confined for a couple of years in an English workhouse actually at eight years old had forgotten the names of a pig and a calf:† their ignorance was surely more deplorable than ridiculous. When the London young lady kept a collection of chicken-bones on her plate at dinner, as a bonnebouche for her brother's horse,‡ Dr. Johnson would not suffer her to be called an idiot, but very judiciously defended her, by maintaining, that her action merely demonstrated her ignorant of points of natural history, on which a London miss had no immediate opportunity of obtaining information. Had the world always

* Vide Sir W. Hamilton's Account of an Eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

† This fact, *we believe*, is mentioned in a letter of Mrs. Cappe on parish schools.

‡ Vide Mrs. Piozzi's English Synonymy.

judged upon such subjects with similar candour, the reproachful cant term of *cockney* would never have been disgracefully naturalized in the English language. This word, as we are informed by a learned philologist, originated from a mistake of a London citizen's son, who, having been bred up entirely in the metropolis, was so gloriously ignorant of country life and country animals, that the first time he heard a *cock* crow, he called it *neighing*.—If such a mistake had been made by an Irishman, it would surely have been called a bull: it has at least as good pretensions to the title as many mistakes made by ignorant Hibernians; for instance, the well-known blunder relative to the sphinx:—An uninformed Irishman, hearing the sphinx alluded to in company, whispered to a friend, "The sphinx, who is that now?"

"A monster, man."

"Oh, a *Munster*-man: I thought he was from Connaught," replied our Irishman, determined not to seem totally unacquainted with the family. Gross and ridiculous as this blunder appears, we are compelled by candour to allow, that the affectation of showing knowledge has betrayed to shame men far superior to our Hibernian, both in reputation and in the means of acquiring knowledge.

Cardinal Richelieu, the Mecænas or would be Mecænas of France, once mistook the name of a noted grammarian, *Maurus Terentianus*, for a play of Terence's. This is called by the French writer who records it, "une *bévue* bien grossière." However gross, a mistake can never be made into a bull. We find *bévues* French, English, Italian, German, Latin, and Greek, of theologians, historians, antiquarians, poets, critics and translators without end. The learned Budæus takes Sir Thomas More's Utopia for a true history; and proposes sending missionaries to work the conversion of so wise a people as the Utopians. An English antiquarian* mistakes a tomb in a Gothic cathedral for the tomb of Hector. Pope, our great poet, and prince of translators, mistakes *Dec. the 8th, Nov. the 5th*, of Cinthio, for Decr. 8th. Novr. 5th; and Warburton, his learned critic, improves upon the blunder, by afterward writing the words December and November at full length. Better still, because more comic, is the blunder of a Frenchman, who, puzzled by the title of one of Cibber's plays, "Love's Last Shift," translates it, "La dernière chemise de l'amour." We laugh at these mistakes, and forget them; but who can forget the blunder of the Cork almanack-maker, who informs the world, that the principal republics in *Europe*, are Venice, Holland, and *America?*

* John Lydgate.

The blunders of men of all countries, except Ireland, do not affix an indelible stigma upon individual or national character. A free pardon is, and ought to be, granted by every Englishman to the vernacular and literary errors of those, who have the happiness to be born subjects of Great Britain. What enviable privileges are annexed to the birth of an Englishman! and what a misfortune it is, to be a native of Ireland!

CHAPTER IV.

LITTLE DOMINICK.

We have laid down the general law of bulls and blunders; but as there is no rule without an exception, we may perhaps allow an exception in favour of little Dominick.

Little Dominick was born at Fort-Reilly, in Ireland, and bred no where until his tenth year, when he was sent to Wales to learn manners and grammar at the school of Mr. Owen ap Davies ap Jenkins ap Jones. This gentleman had reason to think himself the greatest of men; for he had over his chimney-piece a well-smoked genealogy, duly attested, tracing his ancestry in a direct line up to Noah; and moreover he was nearly related to the learned etymologist, who in the time of Queen Elizabeth wrote a folio to prove that the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise was pure Welsh.—With such causes to be proud, Mr. Owen ap Davies ap Jenkins ap Jones was excusable for sometimes seeming to forget that a schoolmaster is but a man. He however sometimes entirely forgot that a boy is but a boy; and this happened most frequently with respect to little Dominick.

This unlucky wight was flogged every morning by his master, not for his vices, but for his vicious constructions, and laughed at by his companions every evening for his idiomatic absurdities. They would probably have been inclined to sympathize in his misfortunes, but that he was the only Irish boy at school; and as he was at a distance from all his relations, and without a friend to take his part, he was a just object of obloquy and derision. Every sentence he spoke was a bull; every two words he put together proved a false concord; and every sound he articulated, betrayed the brogue. But as he possessed some of the characteristic boldness of those who have been dipped in the Shannon, he showed himself able and willing to fight his own battles with the host of foes by whom he was encompassed. Some of these, it was

said, were of nearly twice his stature. This may be exaggerated; but it is certain that our hero sometimes ventured with sly Irish humour to revenge himself upon his most powerful tyrant by mimicking the Welsh accent, in which Mr. Owen ap Jones said to him, "Cot pless me, you plockit, and shall I never *learn* you Enclish crammer?"

It was whispered in the ear of his Dionysius, that our little hero was a mimick; and he was treated with increased severity.

The midsummer holydays approached; but he feared that they would shine no holydays for him. He had written to his mother to tell her, that school would break up the 21st, and to beg an answer, without fail, by return of post: but no answer came.

It was now nearly two months since he had heard from his dear mother or any of his friends in Ireland. His spirits began to sink under the pressure of these accumulated misfortunes: he slept little, ate less, and played not at all; indeed nobody would play with him upon equal terms, because he was nobody's equal; his schoolfellows continued to consider him as a being, if not of a different species, at least of a different *caste* from themselves.

Mr. Owen ap Jones's triumph over the little Irish plockit was nearly complete, for the boy's heart was almost broken, when there came to the school a new scholar—O, how unlike the others!—His name was Edwards; he was the son of a neighbouring Welsh gentleman; and he had himself the spirit of a gentleman. When he saw how poor Dominick was persecuted, he took him under his protection, fought his battles with the Welsh boys, and, instead of laughing at him for speaking Irish, he endeavoured to teach him to speak English. In his answers to the first question Edwards ever asked him, little Dominick made two blunders, which set all his other companions in a roar; yet Edwards would not allow them to be genuine bulls.

In answer to the question, "Who is your father?" Dominick said, with a deep sigh, "I have no father—I am an orphan*—I have only a mother."

"Have you any brothers and sisters?"

"No; I wish I had; for perhaps they would love me, and not laugh at me," said Dominick, with tears in his eyes; "but I have no brothers but myself."

One day Mr. Jones came into the school-room with an open letter in his hand, saying, "Here you little Irish plockit; here's a letter from your mother."

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* Iliad, 6th book, l. 432, Andromache says to Hector, "You will make your son an orphan and your wife a widow."

The little Irish blockhead started from his form, and, throwing his grammar on the floor, leaped up higher than he or any boy in the school had ever been seen to leap before; and, clapping his hands, he exclaimed, "A letter from my mother! —And *will* I hear the letter?—And *will* I see her once more? —And *will* I go home these holydays?—O, then I will be too happy!"

"There's no tanger of that," said Mr. Owen ap Jones; "for your mother, like a wise ooman, writes me here, that py the atvice of your cardian, to oom she is coing to be married, she will not pring you home to Ireland till I send her word you are perfect in your Enclish crammer at least."

"I have my lesson perfect, sir," said Dominick, taking his grammar up from the floor, "*will* I say it now?"

"*Will* I say it now.—No, you plockit, no, and I will write your mother word, you have proke Priscian's head four times this tay, since her letter came. You Irish plockit!" continued the relentless grammarian; "will you never learn the tifference between *shall* and *will*? *Will* I hear the letter, and *will* I see her once more? What Enclish is this, plockit?"

The Welsh boys all grinned, except Edwards, who hummed loud enough to be heard, two lines of the good old English song,

> "And *will* I see him once again?
> And *will* I hear him speak?"

Many of the boys were fortunately too ignorant to feel the force of the quotation; but Mr. Owen ap Jones understood it, turned upon his heel, and walked off. Soon afterwards he summoned Dominick to his awful desk; and, pointing with his ruler to the following page in Harris's Hermes, bade him "reat it, and understant it, if he could."—Little Dominick read, but could not understand.

"Then, reat it loud, you plockit."

Dominick read aloud—

"There is *nothing appears so clearly* an object of the mind or intellect only as *the future* does, since we can find no place for its existence any where else: not but the same, if we consider, is *equally true* of the past——."

"Well, co on—What stops the plockit?—Can't you reat Enclish now?"

"Yes, sir; but I was trying to understand it—I was considering, that this is like what they would call an Irish bull, if I had said it."

Little Dominick could not explain what he meant in English, that Mr. Owen ap Jones *would* understand; and, to punish him for his impertinent observation, the boy was doomed to learn all that Harris and Lowth have written to explain the

nature of *shall* and *will*.—The reader, if he be desirous of knowing the full extent of the penance enjoined, may consult Lowth's Grammar, p. 52, ed. 1799, and Harris's Hermes, p. 10, 11, and 12, 4th edition. Undismayed at the length of his task, little Dominick only said, " I hope, if I say it all without missing a word, you will not give my mother a bad account of me and my grammar studies, sir."

" Say it all first, without missing a word, and then I shall see what I shall say," replied Mr. Owen ap Jones.

Even the encouragement of this oracular answer excited the boy's fond hopes so keenly, that he lent his little soul to the task, learned it perfectly, said it at night, without missing one word, to his friend Edwards, and said it the next morning, without missing one word, to his master.

" And now, sir," said the boy, looking up, " Will you write to my mother ? And *shall* I see her ? And *shall* I go home ?"

" Tell me first, whether you understant all this that you have learnt so cliply," said Mr. Owen ap Jones.

That was more than his bond. Our hero's countenance fell : and he acknowledged, that he did not understand it perfectly.

" Then I cannot write a coot account of you and your crammer studies to your mother ; my conscience coes against it," said the conscientious Mr. Owen ap Jones.

No entreaties could move him. Dominick never saw the letter that was written to his mother ; but he felt the consequence. She wrote word this time punctually *by return of the post*, that she was sorry she could not send for him home these holydays, as she heard so bad an account from Mr. Jones, &c. and as she thought it her duty not to interrupt the course of his education, especially his grammar studies. Little Dominick heaved many a sigh when he saw the packings up of all his schoolfellows, and dropped a few tears as he looked out of the window, and saw them, one after another, get on their Welsh ponies, and gallop off towards their homes.

" I have no home to go to," said he.

" Yes, you have," cried Edwards ; " and *our* horses are at the door to carry us there."

" To Ireland ? me ! the horses !" said the poor boy, quite bewildered : " and will they bring me to Ireland ?"

" No ; the horses cannot carry you to Ireland," said Edwards, laughing good-naturedly, " but you have a home now in England. I asked my father to let me *take* you home with me ; and he says ' Yes,' like a dear good father, and has sent the horses—Come, let's away."

" But will Mr. Jones let me go ?"

"Yes: he dare not refuse; for my father has a living in his gift, that Jones wants, and which he will not have, if he do not change his tune to you."

Little Dominick could not speak one word, his heart was so full.—No boy could be happier than he was, during these holydays: "the genial current of his soul," which had been frozen by unkindness, flowed with all its natural freedom and force.

When Dominick returned to school after these holydays were over, Mr. Owen ap Jones, who now found that the Irish boy had an English protector with a living in his gift, changed his tone. He never more complained unjustly that Dominick broke Priscian's head, seldom called him Irish plockit, and once would have flogged a Welsh boy for taking up this cast-off expression of the master's, but the Irish blockhead begged the culprit off.

Little Dominick sprang forward rapidly in his studies: he soon surpassed every boy in the school, his friend Edwards only excepted. In process of time his guardian removed him to a higher seminary of education. Edwards had a tutor at home. The friends separated. Afterwards they followed different professions in distant parts of the world; and they neither saw nor heard any more of each other for many years. From boys they grew into men, and Dominick, now no longer little Dominick, went over to India as private secretary to one of our commanders in chief. How he got into this situation, or by what gradations he rose in the world, we are not exactly informed: we know only, that he was the reputed author of a much admired pamphlet on India affairs, that the despatches of the General to whom he was secretary were remarkably well written, and that Dominick O'Reilly, esq. returned to England, after several years absence, not miraculously rich, but with a fortune equal to his wishes. His wishes were not extravagant: his utmost ambition was to return to his native country with a fortune that should enable him to live independently of all the world, especially of some of his relations, who had not used him well. His mother was no more.

Upon his arrival in London, one of the first things he did was to read the Irish newspapers.—To his inexpressible joy, he saw the estate of Fort-Reilly advertised to be sold—the very estate which had formerly belonged to his own family. Away he posted directly to an attorney's in Cecil-street, who was empowered to dispose of the land.

When this attorney produced a map of the well known demesne, and an elevation of that house, in which he had spent the happiest hours of his infancy, his heart was so touched, that he was on the point of paying down more for an old ruin than a good new house would cost. The attorney acted *hon-*

estly by his client, and seized this moment to exhibit a plan of the stabling and offices, which, as sometimes is the case in Ireland, were in a style far superior to the dwelling-house. Our hero surveyed these with transport. He rapidly planned various improvements in imagination, and planted certain favourite spots in the demesne.—During this time the attorney was giving directions to a clerk about some other business: suddenly the name of *Owen ap Jones* struck his ear—He started.

"Let him wait in the front parlour: his money is not forthcoming," said the attorney; "and if he keep Edwards in jail till he rots——."

"Edwards! Good heavens!—in jail!—What Edwards?" exclaimed our hero.

It was his friend Edwards.

The attorney told him that Mr. Edwards had been involved in great distress by taking upon himself his father's debts, which had been incurred in exploring a mine in Wales; that of all the creditors none had refused to compound, except a Welsh parson, who had been presented to his living by old Edwards; that this Mr. Owen ap Jones had thrown young Mr. Edwards into jail for the debt.

"What is the rascal's demand? He shall be paid off this instant," cried Dominick, throwing down the plan of Fort-Reilly; "send for him up, and let me pay him off upon the spot."

"Had not we best finish our business first, about the O'Reilly estate, sir," said the attorney.

"No, sir; damn the O'Reilly estate," cried he, huddling the maps together on the desk, and, taking up the bank notes, which he had begun to reckon for the purchase money—"I beg your pardon, sir—If you knew the facts you would excuse me—Why does not this rascal come up to be paid?"

The attorney, thunderstruck by this Hibernian impetuosity, had not yet found time to take his pen out of his mouth. As he sat transfixed in his arm-chair, O'Reilly ran to the head of the stairs, and called out in a stentorian voice, "Here, you Mr. Owen ap Jones; come up and be paid off this instant, or you shall never be paid *at all*."

Up stairs hobbled the old schoolmaster, as fast as the gout and Welsh ale would let him—"Cot pless me, that voice," he began.—

"Where's your bond, sir?" said the attorney.

"Safe here, Cot be praised," said the terrified Owen ap Jones, pulling out of his bosom, first a blue pocket-handkerchief, and then a tattered Welsh grammar, which O'Reilly kicked to the farther end of the room.

"Here is my pond," said he, "in the crammer," which he gathered from the ground: then fumbling over the leaves, he at length unfolded the precious deposit.

O'Reilly saw the bond, seized it, looked at the sum, paid it into the attorney's hands, tore the seal from the bond; then, without looking at old Jones, whom he dared not trust himself to speak to, he clapped his hat upon his head, and rushed out of the room. Arrived at the King's Bench prison, he hurried to the apartment where Edwards was confined.—The bolts flew back: for even the turnkeys seemed to catch our hero's enthusiasm.

"Edwards, my dear boy! how do you do?—Here's a bond debt, justly due to you for my education—O, never mind asking any unnecessary questions; only just make haste out of this undeserved abode—Our old rascal is paid off—Owen ap Jones, you know——Well, how the man stares! Why now will you have the assurance to pretend to forget who I am? and must I *spake*," continued he, assuming the tone of his childhood—"and must I *spake* to you again in my old Irish brogue, before you will ricollict your own *little Dominick?*"

When his friend Edwards was out of prison, and when our hero had leisure to look into business, he returned to the attorney, to see that Mr. Owen ap Jones had been legally satisfied.

"Sir," said the attorney, "I have paid the plaintiff in this suit; and he is satisfied: but I must say," added he with a contemptuous smile, "that you Irish gentlemen are rather in too great a hurry in doing business: business, sir, is a thing that must be done slowly, to be done well."

"I am ready now to do business as slowly as you please; but when my friend was in prison, I thought the quicker I did his business the better.—Now tell me what mistake I have made, and I will rectify it instantly."

"*Instantly!*—'Tis well, sir, with your promptitude, that you have to deal with what prejudice thinks uncommon—an honest attorney.——Here are some bank notes of yours, sir, amounting to a good round sum—You made a little blunder in this business: you left me the penalty, instead of the principal, of the bond—just twice as much as you should have done."

"Just twice as much as was in the bond, but not twice as much as I should have done, nor half as much as I should have done, in my opinion," said O'Reilly; "but whatever I did, was with my eyes open: I was persuaded you were an honest man; in which you see I was not mistaken; and as a man of business, I knew you would pay Jones only his due. The remainder of the money I meant, and mean, should lie in

your hands for my friend Edwards's use. I feared he would not have taken it from my hands: I therefore left it in yours. To have taken my friend out of prison merely to let him go back again to day, for want of money, to keep himself clear with the world, would have been a blunder indeed, but not an Irish blunder: our Irish blunders are never blunders of the heart."

CHAPTER V.

THE BLISS OF IGNORANCE.

No *well-informed* Englishman would laugh at the blunders of such a character as little Dominick; but there are people who justify the assertion, that laughter always arises from a sense of real or imaginary superiority. Now if it be true, that laughter has its source in vanity, as the most ignorant are generally the most vain, they must enjoy this pleasure in its highest perfection. Unconscious of their own deficiencies, and consequently fearless of becoming in their turn the objects of ridicule, they enjoy in full security the delight of humbling their superiors. How much are they to be admired for the courage with which they apply on all occasions, their test of truth! Wise men may be struck with admiration, respect, doubt or humility; but the ignorant, happily unconscious that they know nothing, can be checked in their merriment by no consideration, human or divine.—Theirs is the sly sneer, the dry joke, and the horse laugh: theirs the comprehensive range of ridicule, which takes 'every creature in, of every kind.' No fastidious delicacy spoils their sports of fancy; though ten times told, the tale to them never can be tedious: though dull 'as the fat weed that grows on Lethe's bank,' the jest for them has all the poignancy of satire: on the very offals, the garbage of wit, they can feed and batten. For them the jokes of Joe Miller have that infinite variety, which custom cannot stale. Happy they who can find in every jester the wit of Sterne or Swift; who else can wade through hundreds of thickly printed pages to obtain for their reward, such witticisms as the following* ?—

* The eldest partner in the firm of this book actually read the whole of Old Joe Miller, containing all the good things in above fifty jest books, published from 1558 to 1801 to obtain a competent knowledge of the treasures of English wit; he never felt so much tired even with Coke upon Littleton.

"Two Irishmen having travelled on foot from Chester to Barnet, were confoundedly tired and fatigued by their journey; and the more so when they were told, that they had still about ten miles to go—'By my shoul and St. Patrick,' cries one of them, 'it is but five miles a piece.'

Here, notwithstanding the promise of a jest held forth by the words,—'By my shoul and St. Patrick,' we are ultimately cheated of our hopes. To the ignorant, indeed, the word of promise is kept to the mind as well as to the ear; but others perceive, that instead of a bull, they have only a piece of sentimental arithmetic, founded upon the elegant theorem, that friendship doubles all our pleasures, and divides all our pains.

We must not, from false delicacy to our countrymen, here omit a piece of advice to English retailers or inventors of Irish blunders. Let them beware of such prefatory exclamations as—"*By my shoul and St. Patrick! By Jasus! Arrah Honey! My dear Joy!* &c." because all such phrases, beside being absolutely out of date and fashion in Ireland, raise too high an expectation in the minds of a British audience, operating as much to the disadvantage of the story-teller as the dangerous exordium of—"I'll tell you an excellent story;" an exordium ever to be avoided by all prudent wits.

Another caution should be given to well meaning ignorance. Never produce that as an Irish bull, for which any person of common literature can immediately supply a precedent from our best authors. Never be at the pains, for instance, of telling, from Joe Miller, a *good* story of an *Irish* sailor who *travelled* with captain Cook *round* the world, and afterwards swore to his companions, that it was as flat as a table. This anecdote, however excellent, immediately finds a parallel in Pope:

> "Mad Mathesis alone was unconfin'd,
> Too mad for mere material chains to bind;
> Now to pure space lifts her ecstatic stare,
> Now running *round* the circle finds it square."

Pope was led into the blunder of representing mad Mathesis running *round the circle* and finding it *square*, by a confused notion, that mathematicians had considered the circle as composed of straight lines. His mathematical friends could have told him, that though it was talked of as a polygon, it was not supposed to be a square; but *polygon* would not have rhymed to *stare;* and poets, when they launch into the ocean of words, must have an eye to the helm; at all events a poet, who is not supposed to be a student of the exact sciences, may be forgiven for a mathematical blunder. This affair of squaring the circle seems to be peculiarly liable to error; for even an accurate mathematician cannot speak of it without committing something very like a bull.

Dr. Hutton, in his treatise on mensuration, p. 119, says, "As the *famous* quadrature of the late Mr. John Machin, professor of astronomy in Gresham College, is extremely expeditious and *but little known*, I shall take this opportunity of explaining it."

It is to be presumed, that the doctor here uses the word *famous* in that acceptation, in which it is daily and hourly employed, by our Bond-street loungers, by city apprentices, and men of the ton—"That was a *famous* good joke,"—"He is a *famous* whip."—"We had a *famous* hop, &c." Now it cannot be supposed, that any of these things are in themselves entitled to fame; but they may, indeed, by the courtesy of England, be at once *famous*, and but little known. It is unnecessary to enter into the defence either of Dr. Hutton or of Pope, for they were not born in Ireland, therefore they cannot make bulls; and assuredly their mistakes will not, in the opinion of any person of common sense or candour, derogate from their reputation.

"Never strike till you are sure to wound," is a maxim well known to the polite* and politic part of the world. "Never laugh when the laugh can be turned against you," should be the maxim of those, who find their chief pleasure in making others ridiculous. This principle, if applied to our subject, would lead, however, to a very extensive and troublesome system of mutual forbearance; troublesome in proportion to the good or ill humour of the parties concerned, extensive in proportion to their knowledge and acquirements. A man of cultivated parts will foresee the possibility of the retort courteous, where an ignorant man will enjoy the fearless bliss of ignorance. For example, an illiterate person may enjoy a hearty laugh at the common story of an old Irish beggar-man, who, pretending to be dumb, was thrown off his guard by the question, "How many years have you been dumb?" and answered, "Five years last St. John'sEve, please your honour."

But our triumph over the Irishman abates, when we recollect in the History of England, and in Shakspeare, the case of Saunder Simcox, who pretended to be miraculously and instantaneously cured of blindness at St. Alban's shrine.

Since we have bestowed so much criticism on the blunder of a beggar-man, a word or two must be permitted on the blunder of a thief. It is natural for ignorant people to laugh at the Hibernian, who said, that he had stolen a pound of chocolate *to make tea of*. But philosophers are disposed to abstain from the laugh of superiority, when they recollect, that the Irishman could probably make as good tea from

* Lord Chesterfield.

chocolate, as the chemist could make butter, sugar, and cream, from antimony, sulphur, and tartar. The absurdities in the ancient chemical nomenclature could not be surpassed by any in the Hibernian catalogue. If the reader should think this a rash and unwarrantable assertion, we refer him to an essay,* in which the flagrant abuses of speech in the old language of chemistry are admirably exposed and ridiculed.—Could an Irishman confer a more appropriate appellation upon a white powder, than that of *beautiful black?*

It is really provoking to perceive, that as our knowledge of science or literature extends, we are in more danger of finding, in our own and foreign languages, parallels and precedents for Irish blunders; so that a very well informed man can scarcely with any grace or conscience smile, where a booby squire might enjoy a long and loud horse laugh of contempt.

What crowds were collected to see the Irish bottle conjuror† get in a quart bottle; but Dr. Desaguliers had prepared the English to think such a condensation of animal particles not impossible. He says, Vol. 1, p. 5, of his Lectures on Natural Philosophy, "that the nature of things should last, and their natural course continue the same; all the changes made in bodies must arise only from the various separations, new conjunctions, and motions, of these original particles. *These must be imagined of an unconceivable smallness*, but by the union of them there are made bigger lumps," &c.

Indeed things are now come to such a lamentable pass, that without either literary or scientific acquirements, mere local knowledge, such as can be obtained from a finger-post, may sometimes prevent us from the full enjoyment of the Bœotian absurdity of our neighbours. What can, at first view, appear a grosser blunder, than that of the Irishman, who begged a friend to look over his library, to find for him the history of the world before the creation? Yet this anachronism of ideas is not unparalleled; it is matched, though on a more contracted scale, by an inscription on a British finger-post—

> "Had you seen these roads before they were made,
> You'd lift up your eyes, and bless marshal Wade!"

There is, however, a rabbi, mentioned by Bayle, who far exeeeds both the Irishman and the finger-post. He asserts, that Providence questioned Adam, concerning the creation,

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* Essay on Chemical Nomenclature, by S. Dickson, M. D; in which are comprised observations on the same subject, by R. Kirwan, President R. I. A. —Vide pages 21, 22, 23, &c.

† This conjuror, whose name was Broadstreet, was a native of the county of Longford, in Ireland: he by this hit pocketed 200l., and proved himself to be more knave than fool.

before he was born; and that Adam knew more of the matter than the angels who had laughed at him.

Those who see things in a philosophical light, must have observed more frequently than others, that there is in this world, a continual recurrence or rotation of ideas, events, and blunders. With his utmost ingenuity, or his utmost absurdity, a man, in modern days, cannot contrive to produce a system for which there is no prototype in antiquity, or to commit a blunder, for which there is no precedent. For example, during the late rebellion in Ireland, at the military execution of some wretched rebel, the cord broke, and the criminal who had been only half hanged, fell to the ground The major, who was superintending the execution, exclaimed, "You rascal, if you do that again, I'll kill you, as sure as you breathe."

Now this is by no means an original idea. In an old French book, called "La Charlatanerie des Savans," is the following note—"D'autres ont proposé et résolu en même tems des questions ridicules; par exemple celle-ci: Devreit-on faire souffrir une seconde fois le même genre de mort à un criminel, qui après avoir eu la tête coupée viendroit à résusciter?"—*Finkelth* Præf. ad Observationes pract. num. 12.

The passionate major, instead of being a mere Irish *blunderer*, was, without knowing it, a learned casuist; for he was capable of deciding, in one word, a question, which, it seems, had puzzled the understandings of the ablest lawyers of France, or which had appalled their conscientious sensibility.

Alas, there is nothing new under the sun!

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

CHAPTER VI.

"THOUGHTS THAT BREATHE, AND WORDS THAT BURN."

We lamented in our last chapter, that there is nothing new under the Sun, yet, perhaps, the thoughts and phraseology of the following story may not be familiar to the English.

"Plase your honour," says a man, whose head is bound up with a garter, in token and commemoration of his having been at a fair the preceding night—"Plase your honour, it's what I am striving since six o'clock and before, this morning, becàase I'd sooner trouble your honour's honour than any man in all Ireland, on account of your character, and having lived under your family, me and mine, twinty years, aye, say forty again to the back o'that, in the old gentleman's time, as I well

remember before I was born; that same time I heard tell of your own honour's riding a little horse in green with your gun before you, a grousing over our town-lands, which was the mill and abbey of Ballynagobogg, though 'tis now set away from me (owing to them that belied my father) to Christy Salmon, becàase he's an orange-man—or his wife—though he was once (let him deny it who can), *to my certain knowledge*, behind the haystack in Tullygore, *sworn in* a United man by Captain Alick, who was hanged——Pace to the dead any how!——Well, not to be talking too much of that now, only for this Christy Salmon, I should be still living under your honour."

"Very likely; but what has all this to do with the present business. If you have any complaint to make against Christy Salmon, make it—if not, let me go to dinner."

"Oh, it would be too bad to be keeping your honour from your dinner, but I'll make your honour sinsible immadiately. It is not of Christy Salmon at all at all I'm talking. May be your honour is not sinsible yet who I am—I am Paddy M'Doole, of the Curragh, and I've been a flax-dresser and dealer since I parted your honour's land, and was last night at the fair of Clonaghkilty, where I went just in a quiet way thinking of nothing at all, as any man might, and had my little yarn along with me, my wife's and the girl's year's spinning, and all just hoping to bring them back a few honest shillings as they desarved—none better!—Well, plase your honour, my beast lost a shoe, which brought me late to the fair, but not so late but what it was as throng as ever; you could have walked over the heads of the men, women, and childer, a foot and a horseback, all buying and selling, so I to be sure thought no harm of doing the like, so I makes the best bargain I could of the little hanks for my wife and the girl, and the man I sold them to was just weighing them at the crane, and I standing forenent him—'success to myself!' said I, looking at the shillings I was putting into my waistcoat pocket for my poor family, when up comes the inspector, whom I did not know, I'll take my oath, from Adam, nor couldn't know, becàase he was the deputy inspector, and had been but just made, of which I was ignorant, by this book and all the books that ever were shut and opened—but no matter for that; he seizes my hanks out of the scales that I had just sold, saying they were unlawful and forfeit, becàase by his watch it was past four o'clock, which I denied to be possible, plase your honour, becàase not one, nor two, nor three, but all the town and country were selling the same as myself in broad day, only when the deputy came up they stopped, which I could not, by rason I did not know him.—'Sir,' says I (very civil), 'if I had known you, it would have been another case, but any how I hope no jantleman will be making it a crime to a poor man to sell his little matter of yarn for his wife and

childer after four o'clock, when he did not know it was contrary to law at all at all.'

"'I gave you notice that it was contrary to law at the fair of Edgerstown,' said he—'I axe your pardon, sir,' said I, 'it was my brother, for I was by.'—With that he calls me liar, and what not, and takes a grip* of me, and I a grip of my flax, and he had a shilala† and I had none, so he gave it me over the head. I crying 'murder! murder!' the while, and clinging to the scales to save me, and they set a swinging and I with them, plase your honour, till the bame comes down a'top o'the back o'my head, and *kilt* me as your honour sees."

"I see that you are alive still, I think."

"It's not his fault if am, plase your honour, for he left me for dead, and I am as good as dead still: if it be plasing to your honour to examine my head, you'll be sinsible I'm telling nothing but the truth. Your honour never *seen* a man kilt as I was and am—all which I'm ready (when convanient) to swear before your honour."‡

The reiterated assurances this hero gives us of his being killed, and the composure with which he offers to swear to his own assassination and decease, appear rather surprising and ludicrous to those who are not aware, that *kilt* is here used in a metaphorical sense, and that it has not the full force of our word killed. But we have been informed by a lady of unquestionable veracity, that she very lately received a petition worded in this manner—

"To the right hon. lady E—— P——.

"Humbly sheweth.

"That your poor petitioner is now lying dead in a ditch, &c."

This poor Irish petitioner's expression, however preposterous it sounds, might perhaps be justified, if we were inclined to justify an Irishman by the example, not only of poets comic and tragic, but of prose writers of various nations. The evidence in favour both of the fact and the belief, that people can speak and walk after they are dead, is attested by stout warriors and grave historians. The emperor Charles the fifth, we all know, assisted at his own funeral, said a mass, and sung a requiem over himself; but this was only a "mockery of woe." Let us listen to the solemn voice of a princess, who comes sweeping in the sceptred pall of gorgeous tragedy, to inform us, that half herself has buried the other half—

"Weep eyes; melt into tears these cheeks to lave,
"One half myself lays t'other in the grave."§

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* A gripe or fast hold.

† An oak stick, supposed to be cut from the famous wood of Shilela.

‡ This is nearly verbatim from a late Irish complainant.

§ "Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux et fondez vous en eau,
La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau."

For six such lines as these Corneille received six thousand livres, and the admiration of the French court and people during the Augustan age of French literature. But an Italian is not content with killing by halves. Here is a man from Italy, who goes on fighting, not like Witherington, upon his stumps, but fairly after he is dead.

> "Nor yet perceived the vital spirit fled,
> But still fought on, nor knew that he was dead."*

Common sense is somewhat shocked, at this single instance of an individual fighting after he is dead; but we shall, doubtless, be reconciled to the idea by the example of a gallant and modern commander, who has declared his opinion, that nothing is more feasible than for a garrison to fight, or at least to surrender, after they are dead, nay, after they are buried. —Witness this public document.

"Liberty and Equality!

"May 29th, 30th Floreal, 6. } Garrison of Ostend.

"Muscar, commandant of Ostend, to the commandant in chief of his British majesty.

"General,

"The council of war was sitting when I received the honour of your letters. We have unanimously resolved not to surrender the place, until we shall have been buried in its ruins, &c."

One step further in hyperbole is reserved for him, who, being buried, carries about his own sepulchre.

> "To live a life half dead, a living death,
> And buried; but oh, yet more miserable!
> Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave!"

No person, if he heard this passage for the first time from the lips of an Irishman, could hesitate to call it a series of bulls; yet these lines are part of the beautiful complaint of Samson Agonistes on his blindness. Such are the hyperboles sanctioned by the genius, or, what with some judges may have more influence, the name of Milton. The bounds which separate sublimity from bombast, and absurdity from wit, are as fugitive as the boundaries of taste. Only those, who are accustomed to examine and appraise literary goods, are sensible of the prodigious change that can be made in their apparent value, by a slight change in the manufacture. The absurdity of a man's swearing he was killed, or declaring, that he is now dead in a ditch, is revolting to common sense;

* "Il pover uomo che non s'en era accorto,
Andava combattendo ed erà morto."

yet the *living death* of Dapperwit in the "Rape of the Lock," is not absurd, but witty; and representing men as dying many times before their death is in Shakspeare sublime.

> "Cowards die many times before their death;
> The brave can never taste of death but once."

The most direct contradictions in words do not *(in English writers)* destroy the effect of irony, wit, pathos, or sublimity. In the classic ode on Eton college the poet exclaims,—

> "To each their sufferings, all are men
> Condemn'd alike to groan;
> The tender for another's pain,
> Th' *unfeeling* for their own."

Who but a half-witted dunce would ask, how those that are unfeeling can have sufferings? When Milton in melodious verse inquires,

> "Who shall tempt with *wandering feet*
> The dark *unbottomed* infinite abyss,
> And through the *palpable obscure* find out
> His uncouth way!"——

What Zoilus shall dare interrupt this flow of poetry, to object to the palpable obscure, or to ask how feet can wander upon that which has no bottom?

It is easy, as Tully has long ago observed, to fix the brand of ridicule upon the *verbum ardens* of orators and poets—the "Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn."

CHAPTER VII.

PRACTICAL BULLS.

As we have not hitherto been successful in finding original Irish bulls in language, we must now look for them in conduct. A person may be guilty of a solecism, without uttering a single syllable—"That man has been guilty of a solecism with his hand," an ancient critic said of an actor, who had pointed his hand upwards when invoking the infernal gods.—"You may act a lie as well as speak one," says Wollaston. Upon the same principle, the Irish may be said to act, as well as utter bulls. We shall give some instances of their practical bulls, which we hope to find unmatched by the blunders of all other nations. Most people, whether they be savage or civilized, can contrive to revenge themselves upon their enemies

without blundering, but the Irish are exceptions. They cannot even do this without *a bull.* During the late Irish rebellion there was a banker to whom they had a peculiar dislike, and on whom they had vowed vengeance; accordingly they got possession of as many of his bank notes as they could, and made a bonfire of them! this might have been called a feu de joie, perhaps, but certainly not un feu d'artifice; for nothing could show less art than burning a banker's notes, in order to destroy his credit. How much better do the English understand the arts of vengeance! Captain Drinkwater* informs us, that during the siege of Gibraltar, the English, being half famished, were most violently enraged against the Jews, who withheld their stores of provision, and made money of the public distress, a crime *never committed except by Jews;* at length the fleet relieved the besieged, and as soon as the fresh provisions were given out, the English soldiers and sailors, to revenge themselves upon the Jews, burst open their stores, and actually roasted a pig at a fire made of cinnamon. There are other persons as well as the Irish, who do not always understand their own interests where their passions are concerned. That great warrior, Hyder Ali, once lost a battle by a practical bull. Being encamped within sight of the British, he resolved to give them a high idea of his forces and of his artillery; for this purpose, before the engagement,† he ordered his army to march early, and conveying some large pieces of cannon to the top of a hill, he caused them to be pointed at the English camp, which they reached admirably well, and occasioned a kind of disorder and haste in striking and removing tents, &c. Hyder, delighted at having thus insulted the English, caused all his artillery, even the very smallest pieces, to be drawn up the hill for the purpose of making a vain parade, though the greater part of the balls could never reach the English; he imagined he should give the enemy a high idea of his forces, and intimidate them by showing all his artillery, and the vivacity with which it was worked; and in order that his intention might be answered, he encouraged the soldiers himself, by giving money to the cannoneers of those pieces that appeared to be best served.

The English, presently after this farce was over, obliged Hyder to come down from labour-in-vain hill, and to give them battle in earnest. As the historian observes, "The ridiculous cannonade at the top of the hill had exhausted his ammunition, his great guns were useless to him, and he lost the day by his premature rejoicings before the battle." A still more ancient precedent for this preposterous practical bull of

* See his account of the siege of Gibraltar.
† Life of Hyder Ali Khan, vol. 2, p. 231.

rejoicing for an anticipated victory was given by Xerxes, we believe, who brought with him an immense block of marble, on which he intended to inscribe the date and manner of his victory over the Greeks. When Xerxes was defeated, the Greeks dedicated this stone to Nemesis, the goddess of vengeance. But Xerxes was in the habit of making practical bulls, such as whipping the sea, and begging pardon for it afterwards; throwing fetters into the Hellespont as a token of subjugation, and afterwards expiating his offence by an offering of a golden cup and Persian scymetar.

To such blunders can the passions betray the most renowned heroes, although they had not the misfortune to have been born in Ireland.

The impatience which induced Hyder Ali to anticipate victory is not confined to military men and warlike operations; if we descend to common life and vulgar business, we shall find the same disposition even in the precincts of Change-alley: those who bargained for South Sea stock, that was not actually forthcoming, were called *bears*, in allusion to the practice of the hunters of bears in Canada, who were accustomed to bargain for the skin of the bear before it was caught; but whence the correlative term *bull* is derived we are at a loss to determine, and we must also leave it to the mercantile speculators of England to explain, why gentlemen call themselves bulls of wheat and bulls of coals—all we can say is, that these are not Irish bulls. There is one distinguishing peculiarity of the Irish bull—its horns *are tipped with brass.** It is generally supposed, that persons who have been dipped in the Shannon† are ever afterwards endued with a supernatural portion of what is called by enemies impudence or assurance, by friends self-possession or *civil courage.* These invulnerable mortals are never oppressed with *mauvais honte*, that malady, which keeps the faculties of the soul under imaginary imprisonment; as the night-mare holds or seems to hold the powerless limbs of her victim. A well dipped Irishman, on the contrary, can move, speak, think, like Demosthenes, with as much ease, when the eyes of numbers are upon him, as if the spectators were so many cabbage stocks. This virtue of *civil courage* is of inestimable value in the opinion of the best judges—the great lord Verulam,—no one by the by could be a better judge of its value than he, who wanted it so much,—the great lord Verulam declares, that if he were asked what is the first, second, and third thing necessary to success in public business, he should answer boldness, boldness, boldness. Success to the nation which possesses it in perfection!

* See the advice of Cleomenes to Crius.—HERODOTUS ERATO.

† It is said, that the waters of the Garonne are famed for a similar virtue.

Bacon was too acute and candid a philosopher not to acknowledge, that like all the other goods of life this same boldness has its countervailing disadvantages.

"Certainly," says he, "to men of great judgment bold persons are a sport to behold; nay, and to the vulgar, boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous, for if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity; especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as needs it must."

The man, however, who posseses boldness in perfection, can never be put out of countenance, and consequently, can never exhibit, for the sport of his enemies, a face in this wooden posture. It is the deficiency, and not the excess of this quality, that is to be feared. Civil boldness without military courage would, indeed, be somewhat ridiculous: but we cannot accuse the Irish of any want of military courage; on the contrary, it is supposed in England, that an Irishman is always ready *to give any gentleman satisfaction*, even where none is desired.

At the close of the American war, as a noble lord of high naval character was returning home to his family after various escapes from danger, he was detained a day at Holyhead by contrary winds. Reading in a summer-house, he heard the well known sound of bullets whistling near him: he looked about, and found that two balls had just passed through the door close beside him; he looked out of the window, and saw two gentlemen who were just charging their pistols again, and, as he guessed that they had been shooting at a mark upon the door, he rushed out, and very civilly remonstrated with them on the imprudence of firing at the door of a house without having previously examined whether any one was within side. One of them immediately answered, in a tone which proclaimed at once his disposition and his country—"Sir, I did not know you were within there, and I don't know who you are now; but if I've given offence, I am willing," said he, holding out the ready charged pistols, "to give you *the satisfaction of a gentleman*—take your choice."

With his usual presence of mind, the noble lord seized hold of both the pistols, and said to his astonished countryman—"Do me the justice, sir, to go into that summer-house, shut the door, and let me have two shots at you; then we shall be upon equal terms, and I shall be quite at your service to give or receive the *satisfaction of a gentleman*."

There was an air of drollery and of superiority in his manner, which at once struck, and pleased the Hibernian.—"Upon my conscience, sir, I believe you are a very honest fellow," said he, looking him earnestly in the face, "and I've

a great mind to shake hands with you.—Will you only just tell me who you are ?"

The nobleman told his name—a name dear to every Briton and every Irishman.

"I beg your pardon, and that's what no man ever accused me of doing before," cried the gallant Hibernian; "and had I known who you were, I would as soon have *shot my own soul* as have fired at the door. But how could I tell who was within side ?"

"That is the very thing of which I complain," said his lordship.

His candid opponent admitted the justice of the complaint as soon as he understood it, and he promised never more to be guilty of such a practical bull.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUBLIN SHOEBLACK.

Upon looking over our last chapter on Practical Bulls, we were much concerned to find, that we have so few Irish and so many foreign blunders. It is with still more regret we perceive, that notwithstanding our utmost diligence, we have not yet been able to point out the distinguishing characteristic of an Irish bull. But to compensate for this disappointment we have devised a syllogism, which some people may prefer to an a priori argument, to prove irrefragably, that the Irish are blunderers.

After the instances we have produced, chapter 6th, of the *verbum ardens* of English and foreign poets; and after the resemblance that we have pointed out betwixt certain figures of rhetoric and the Irish bull; we have little reason to fear, that the candid and enlightened reader should object to our major.

Major.—Those who use figurative language are disposed to make bulls.

Minor.—The Irish use figurative language.

Conclusion.—Therefore the Irish are disposed to make bulls.

We proceed to establish the truth of our minor, and the first evidence we shall call is a Dublin shoeblack. He is not in circumstances peculiarly favourable for the display of figurative language; he is in a court of justice, upon his trial for life or death. A quarrel happened between two shoeblacks, who were playing at what in England is called pitch-farthing,

or heads and tails, and in Ireland, head or harp. One of the combatants threw a small paving stone at his opponent, who drew out the knife with which he used to scrape shoes, and plunged it up to the hilt in his companion's breast. It is necessary for our story, to say, that near the hilt of this knife was stamped the name of Lamprey, an eminent cutler in Dublin. The shoeblack was brought to trial. With a number of significant gestures, which on his audience had all the powers that Demosthenes ascribes to action, he, in a language not purely attic, gave the following account of the affair to his judge.

"Why, my lard, as I was going past the Royal Exchange I meets Billy—'Billy,' says I, 'will you sky a copper?'—'Done,' says he—'Done,' says I—and done and done's enough between two jantleman.—With that I ranged them fair and even with my hook-em-snivey—up they go.—'Music!' says he—'Skull!' says I—and down they come three brown mazards.—'By the holy! you fleshed 'em,' says he—'You lie,' says I.—With that he ups with a lump of a two year old, and let's drive at me—I out's with my bread-earner, and gives it him up to Lamprey in the bread basket."

To make this intelligible to the English, some comments are necessary. Let us follow the text, step by step, and it will afford our readers, as lord Kames says of Blair's Dissertation on Ossian, a delicious morsel of criticism.

As I was going past the Royal Exchange I meets Billy.

In this apparently simple exordium, the scene and the meeting with Billy are brought before the eye, by the judicious use of the present tense.

Billy, says I, will you sky a copper?

A copper! genus pro specie! the generic name of copper for the base individual halfpenny.

Sky a copper.

To sky is a new verb, which none but a master hand could have coined; a more splendid metonymy could not be applied upon a more trivial occasion; the lofty idea of raising a metal to the skies, is substituted for the mean thought of tossing up a halfpenny. Our orator compresses his hyperbole into a single word. Thus the mind is prevented from dwelling long enough upon the figure to perceive its enormity. This is the perfection of the art. Let the genius of French exaggeration and of Eastern hyperbole hide their diminished heads—Virgil is scarcely more sublime.

> "Ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit."
> "Her feet on earth, her head amidst the clouds."

Up they go, continues our orator.

Music! says he—Skull! says I.

Metaphor continually; on one side of an Irish halfpenny there is a harp; this is expressed by the general term music, which is finely contrasted with the word skull.

Down they come, three brown mazards!

Mazards! how the diction of our orator is enriched from the vocabulary of Shakspeare! the word head, instead of being changed for a more general term, is here brought distinctly to the eye by the term mazard, or face, which is more appropriate to his majesty's profile than the words skull or head.

By the holy! you flesh'd 'em, says he.

By the holy! is an oath in which more is meant than meets the ear: it is an ellipsis—an abridgement of an oath. The full formula runs thus—By the holy poker of Hell?—This instrument is of Irish invention or imagination. It seems a useful piece of furniture in the place for which it is intended, to stir the devouring flames, and thus to increase the torments of the damned. Great judgment is necessary to direct an orator how to suit his terms to his auditors, so as not to shock their feelings either by what is too much above, or too much below common life. In the use of oaths, where the passions are warm, this must be particularly attended to, else they lose their effect, and seem more the result of the head than the heart. But to proceed—

By the holy! you flesh'd 'em.

To flesh is another verb of Irish coinage; it means, in shoeblack dialect, to touch a halfpenny, as it goes up into the air, with the fleshy part of the thumb, so as to turn it which way you please, and thus to cheat your opponent.—What an intricate explanation saved by one word!

You lie, says I.

Here no periphrasis would do the business.

With that he ups with a lump of a two year old, and lets drive at me.

With that.—These are not unmeaning words, used like expletives by some orators, merely to gain time; for though the phrase, *with that*, varies in signification according to circumcumstances, either it denotes, that one action immediately follows another as its consequence, or else it implies, that two actions happen, or two ideas occur, actually at the same time.

He ups with. A verb is here formed of two prepositions—a novelty in grammar. Conjunctions, we all know, are corrupted anglo-saxon verbs; but prepositions, according to Horne Tooke, derive only from anglo-saxon nouns.

All this time it is possible, that the mere English reader may not be able to guess what it is, that our orator ups with or takes up. He should be apprised, that a lump of a two year old is a middle sized stone. This is a metaphor, bor-

rowed partly from the grazier's vocabulary, and partly from the arithmetician's vade-mecum. A stone, to come under the denomination of a lump of a two year old, must be to a less stone, as a two year old calf is to a yearling; or it must be to a larger stone than itself, as a two year old calf is to an ox. Here the scholar sees, that there must be two statements, one in the rule of three direct, and one in the rule of three inverse, to obtain precisely the thing required; yet the untutored Irishman, without suspecting the necessity of this operose process, arrives at the solution of the problem by some short cut of his own, as he clearly evinces by the propriety of his metaphor. To be sure there seems some incongruity in his throwing this lump of a two year old calf at his adversary. No arm but that of Milo could be strong enough for such a feat. Upon recollection, however bold as this figure may seem, there are precedents for its use.

"We read in a certain author," says Beattie, "of a giant, who, in his wrath, tore off the top of the promontory, and flung it at the enemy; and so huge was the mass, that you might, says he, have seen goats browsing on it as it flew through the air." Compared with this, our orator's figure is cold and tame.

"*I outs with my bread-earner*," continues he.

We forbear to comment on *outs with*, because the intelligent critic immediately perceives, that it has the same sort of merit ascribed to *ups with*. What our hero dignifies with the name of his bread-earner, is the knife with which, by scraping shoes, he earned his bread.—Pope's ingenious critic, Mr. Warton, bestows judicious praise upon the art with which this poet, in the Rape of the Lock, has used many "periphrases and uncommon expressions," to avoid mentioning the name of *scissors*, which would sound too vulgar for epic dignity;—fatal engine, forfex, meeting points, &c. Though the metonymy of *bread-earner* for a shoeblack's knife may not equal these in elegance, it perhaps surpasses them in ingenuity.

*I gives it him up to Lamprey in the bread-basket.**

Homer is happy in his description of wounds, but this surpasses him in the characteristic choice of circumstance.—*Up to Lamprey*, gives us at once a complete idea of the length, breadth, and thickness of the wound, without the assistance of the coroner. It reminds us of a passage in Virgil—

"Cervice orantis *capulo tenus* abdidit ensem."
"Up to the hilt his shining falchion sheathed."

* The stomach.

Let us now compare the Irish shoeblack's metaphorical language with the sober *slang* of an English blackguard, who, fortunately for the fairness of the comparison, was placed somewhat in similar circumstances.

Lord Mansfield, examining a man who was a witness in the court of King's Bench, asked him, what he knew of the defendant.

"O, my lord, I knew him. *I was up to him.*"

"Up to him!" says his lordship, "what do you mean by being up to him?"

"Mean, my lord! why, *I was down upon him.*"

"Up to him and down upon him!" says his lordship, turning to counsellor Dunning, "what does the fellow mean?"

"Why, I mean, my lord, as deep as he thought himself, *I stagged him.*"

"I cannot conceive, friend," says his lordship, "what you mean by this sort of language, I do not understand it."

"Not understand it!" rejoined the fellow, with surprise, "*Lord, what a flat you must be!*"

Though he undervalued lord Mansfield, this man does not seem to have been a very bright genius. In his cant words "*up to him—down upon him—stagged him,*" there are no metaphors; and we confess ourselves to be as great *flats* as his lordship, for we do not understand this sort of language.

"True, no meaning puzzles more than wit,"

As we may see in another English example. Proverbs have been called the wisdom of nations, therefore it is fair to have recourse to them in estimating national abilities. Now there is an old English Proverb, "Tenterten steeple is the cause of Goodwin sands."

"This proverb," says Mr. Ray, "is used, when an absurd and ridiculous reason is given of any thing in question; an account of the original whereof I find in one of bishop Latimer's sermons in these words—'Mr. Moore was once sent with commission into Kent, to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Goodwin's sands, and the shelf which stopped up Sandwich haven. Thither cometh Mr. Moore, and calleth all the country before him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and men that could, of all likelihood, best satisfy him of the matter, concerning the stopping of Sandwich haven. Among the rest came in before him an old man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than a hundred years old. When Mr. Moore saw this aged man, he thought it expedient to hear him say his mind in this matter, (for being so old a man, it was likely that he knew the most in that presence or company,) so Mr. Moore called this old

aged man unto him and said, "Father, (said he) tell me, if you can, what is the cause of the great arising of the sands and shelves hereabout this haven, which stop it up, so that no ships can arrive here. You are the oldest man I can espy in all the company, so that if any man can tell any cause of it, you, of all likelihood, can say most to it, or, at leastwise, more than any man here assembled."

"Yea, forsooth, good Mr. Moore," quoth this old man, "for I am well nigh a hundred years old, and no man here in this company any thing near my age."

"Well, then," quoth Mr. Moore, "how say you to this matter? What think you to be the cause of these shelves and sands, which stop up Sandwich haven?"

"Forsooth, sir," quoth he, "I am an old man, I think that Tenterten steeple is the cause of Goodwin's sands. For I am an old man, sir," quoth he, "I may remember the building of Tenterten steeple, and I may remember when there was no steeple at all there; and before that Tenterten *or Totterden* steeple was in building, there was no manner of talking of any flats or sands that stopped up the haven, and therefore I think, that Tenterten steeple is the cause of the decay and destroying of Sandwich haven."*—Thus far the bishop.

The prolix pertinacity, with which this *old aged* man adheres to the opinion that he had formed, without any intelligible reason, is characteristic of an English peasant; but however absurd his mode of judging may be, and however confused and incongruous his ideas, his species of absurdity surely bears no resemblance to an Hibernian blunder. We cannot even suspect it to be possible, that a man of this slow circumspect character could be in any danger of making an Irish bull; and we congratulate the English peasantry and populace as a body, upon their possessing that temper which

> "Wisely rests content with sober sense,
> Nor makes to dangerous wit a vain pretence."

Even the *slang* of English pickpockets and coiners is, as we may see in Colquhoun's View of the Metropolis, free from all seducing mixture of wit and humour.—What Englishman would ever have thought of calling persons in the pillory, *the babes in the wood.* This is a common cant phrase amongst Dublin reprobates. Undoubtedly such phrases tend to lessen the power of shame and the effect of punishment, and a witty rogue will lead numbers to the gallows. English morality is not in so much danger as Irish manners must be from the hu-

* This ancient old man, we fear, was more knave than fool. History informs us, that the bishop of Rochester had directed the revenue, appropriated for keeping Goodwin harbour in repair, to the purpose of building a steeple.—Vide Fuller's Worthies of England, page 65.

morous talents in their knights of industry. If nevertheless there be frequent executions for capital crimes in England, we must account for this in the words of the old lord chief justice Fortescue—" More men," says his lordship, " are hanged in *Englonde* in one year than *in Fraunce* in seven, *because the English have better hartes ;* the *Scotchmenne* likewise never *dare rob*, but only commit larcenies." At all events the phlegmatic temper of *Englonde* secures her from making bulls. The propensity to this species of blunder exists in minds of a totally different cast ; in those who are quick and enthusiastic, who are confounded by the rapidity and force with which undisciplined multitudes of ideas crowd for utterance. Persons of such intellectual characters are apt to make elisions in speaking, which they trust the capacities of their audience will supply : passing rapidly over a long chain of thought, they sometimes forget the intermediate links, and no one but those of equally rapid habits can follow them successfully.

We hope that the evidence of the Dublin shoeblack has, in some degree, tended to prove our *minor*, that the Irish are disposed to use figurative language : we shall not however rest our cause on a single evidence, however respectable ; but before we summon our other witnesses, we beg to relieve the reader's attention, which must have been fatigued by such a chapter of criticism.—They shall now have the plain " unvarnished tale" of a mendicant. A specimen of city rhetoric is given in the shoeblack ; the country mendicant's eloquence is of a totally different species.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HIBERNIAN MENDICANT.

Perhaps the reader may wish to see, as well as hear the petitioner. At first view you might have taken him for a Spaniard : he was tall ; and if he had been a gentleman, you would have said that there was an air of dignity in his figure. He seemed very old, yet he appeared more worn by sorrow than by time. Leaning upon a thick oaken stick as he took off his hat to ask for alms, his white hair was blown by the wind.

" Health and long life to you !" said he. " Give an old man something to help to bury him.—He is past his labour, and cannot trouble this world long any way."

He held his hat towards us, with nothing importunate in his manner, but rather with a look of confidence in us, mixed with habitual resignation. His thanks were,—" Heaven bless you! Long life and success to you! to you and yours! and may you never want a friend, as I do."

The last words were spoken low. He laid his hand upon his heart as he bowed to us, and walked slowly away. We called him back; and upon our questioning him farther, he gave the following account of himself.

" I was bred and born—but no matter where such a one as I was bred and born, no more than where I may die, and be buried. *I*, that have neither son, nor daughter, nor kin, nor friend, on the wide Earth to mourn over my grave, when I am laid in it, as I soon must—Well! when it pleases God to take me, I shall never be missed out of this world, so much as by a dog—And why should I? Having never in my time done good to any—but evil—which I have lived to repent me of many's the long day and night, and ever shall whilst I have sense and reason left. In my youthful days, God was too good to me: I had friends, and a little home of my own to go to—a pretty spot of land for a farm as you could see, with a snug cabin, and every thing complete, and all to be mine; for I was the only one my father and mother had, and accordingly was made much of, too much; for I grew headstrong upon it, and high, and thought nothing of any man, and little of any woman—but one. That one I surely did think of; and well worth thinking of she was. Beauty, they say is all fancy; but she was a girl every man might fancy. Never was one more sought after. She was then just in her prime, and full of life and spirits; but nothing light in her behaviour —quite modest—yet obliging. She was too good for me to be thinking of, no doubt; but "faint heart never won fair lady," so I made bold to speak to Rose, for that was her name, and after a world of pains, I began to gain upon her good liking, but couldn't get her to say more than that she never *seen* the man she should fancy so well.—This was a great deal from her, for she was coy, and proud like, as she had a good right to be; and, besides being young, loved her little innocent pleasure, and could not *easy* be brought to give up her sway.—No fault of hers: but all very natural.—Well! I always considered she never would have held out so long, nor have been so stiff with me, had it not been for an old aunt Honour of hers—God rest her soul! One should not be talking ill of the dead—but she was more out of my way than enough: yet the cratur had no malice in her against me, only meaning her child's good, as she called it, but mistook it, and thought to make Rose happy by some greater match than me, counting her fondness for me, which she could not but see

something of, childishness, that she would soon be broke of. Now there was a party of English soldiers quartered in our town, and there was a sergeant amongst them that had money and a pretty place, as they said, in his own country. He courted Rose, and the aunt favoured him. He and I could never relish one another at all. He was a handsome portly man, but very proud, and looked upon me as dirt under his feet, because I was an Irishman; and at every word would say, "*That's an Irish bull!*" or "*Do you hear Paddy's brogue?*"—at which his fellow soldiers, being all English, would look greatly delighted. Now all this could I have taken in good part from any but him, for I was not an ill-humoured fellow: but there was a spite in him I plainly saw against me, and I could not nor would not take a word from him against me or my country, especially when Rose was by, who did not like me the worse for having a proper spirit. She little thought what would come of it.—Whilst all this was going on, her aunt Honour found to object against me, that I was wild and given to drink, both which charges were false and malicious, and I knew could come from none other than the sergeant, which enraged me the more against him for speaking *so mean* behind my back—Now I knew, that though the sergeant did not drink spirits, he drank plenty of beer. Rose took it, however, to heart, and talked very serious upon it, observing, she could never think to marry a man given to drink, and that the sergeant was remarkable sober and staid, therefore most like, as her aunt Honour said, to make a good husband. The words went straight to my heart, along with Rose's look—I said not a word, but went out, resolving before I slept to take an oath against spirits of all sorts for Rose's sweet sake. That evening I fell in with some boys of the neighbours, who would have had me along with them, but I *denied myself* and them; and all I would taste was one parting glass, and then made my vow in the presence of the priest, forswearing spirits for two years. Then I went straight to her house to tell her what I had done, not being sensible that I was that same time a little elevated with the parting glass I had taken. The first thing I noticed on going into the room was the man I least wished to see there, and least looked for at this minute: he was in high talk with the aunt, and Rose sitting on the other side of him, no way strange towards him as I fancied; but that was only fancy, and effect of the liquor I had drunk, which made me see things wrong. I went up, and put my head between them, asking Rose, did she know what I had been about?

"Yes—too well!" said she, drawing back from my breath. —And the aunt looked at her, and she at the aunt, and the sergeant stopped his nose, saying he had not been long enough

in Ireland to love the smell of whiskey.—I observed, that was an uncivil remark in the present company, and added, that I had not taken a drop that night, but one glass. At which he sneered and said, that was a bull and a blunder, but no wonder as I was an Irishman. I replied in defence of myself and country.—We went on from one smart word to another; and some of his soldiermen being of the company, he had the laugh against me still. I was vexed to see Rose bear so well what I could not bear myself. And the talk grew higher and higher; and from talking of blunders and such trifles, we got, I cannot myself tell you how, on to great party matters, and politics, and religion. And I was a catholic, and he a protestant; and there he had the thing still against me. The company seeing matters not agreeable, dropped off till none were left but the sergeant, and the aunt, and Rose, and myself. The aunt gave me a hint to part, but I would not take it; for I could not bear to go away worsted, and borne down as it were by the English faction, and Rose by to judge. The aunt was called out by one, who wanted her to go to a funeral the next day: the Englishman then let fall something about our Irish howl, and savages, which Rose herself said was uncivil, she being an Irish woman, which he, thinking only of making game on me, had forgot.—I knocked him down, telling him it was he that was the savage to affront a lady. As he got up, he said, that he'd have the law of me, if any law was to be had in Ireland.

"'The law!' said I, 'and you a soldier!'

"'Do you mean to call me coward?' said he. 'This is what an English soldier must not bear.' With that he snatches at his arms that were beside him, asking me again, did I mean to call an Englishman coward?

"'Tell me first,' said I; 'Did you mean to call us Irish savages?'

"'That's no answer to *my* question,' says he, 'or only an Irish answer.'

"'It is not the worse for that, may be,' says I, very coolly, despising the man now, and just took up a knife, that was on the table, to cut off a button that was hanging at my knee. As I was opening of the knife he asks me, was I going to stab at him with my Irish knife, and directly fixes a bayonet at me; on which I seizes a musket and bayonet one of his men had left; telling him I knew the use of it as well as he or any Englishman, and better; for that I should never have gone, as he did, to charge it against an unarmed man.

"'You had your knife,' said he, drawing back.

"'If I had, it was not thinking of you,' said I, throwing the knife away. 'See! I'm armed like yourself now; fight me like a man and a soldier, if you dare,' says I.

"'Fight me, if you dare,' says he.

"Rose calls to me to stop; but we were both out of ourselves at the minute—we thrust at each other—he missed me—I hit him. Rose ran in between us to get the musket from my hand: it was loaded, and went off in the struggle, and the ball lodged in her body—she fell! and what happened next I cannot tell, for the sight left my eyes, and all sense forsook me. When I came to myself the house was full of people, going to and fro, some whispering, some crying; and till the words reached my ears—'Is she quite dead?'—I could not understand where I was, or what had happened—I wished to forget again, but could not. The whole truth came upon me, and yet I could not shed a tear! but just pushed my way through the crowd into the inner room, and up to the side of the bed. There she lay stretched, almost a corpse—quite still!—her sweet eyes closed, and no colour in her cheeks, that had the night before been so rosy!—I took hold of one of her hands, that hung down, and she then opens her eyes, and knew me directly, and smiles upon me, and says—'It was no fault of yours: take notice all of you, it was no fault of his if I die; but *that* I won't do for his sake, if I can help it!'—that was the word she spoke. I thinking, from her speaking so strong, that she was not badly hurt, knelt down to whisper her, that if my breath did smell of spirits the last night, it was the parting glass I had tasted before making the vow I had done against drink for her sake; and that there was nothing I would not do for her, if it would please God to spare her to me. She just pressed my hand, to show me she was sensible. The priest came in, and they forced our hands asunder, and carried me away out of the room.—Presently there was a great cry, and I knew all was over."

Here the old man's voice failed, and he turned his face from us. When he had somewhat recovered himself, to change the course of his thoughts, we asked, whether he were prosecuted for his assault on the English sergeant, and what became of him?

"Oh! to do him justice, as one should do to every one," said the old man, "he behaved very handsome to me when I was brought to trial; and told the whole truth, only blamed himself more than I would have done, and said it was all his fault for laughing at me and my nation more than a man could bear, situated as I was. They acquitted me through his means. We shook hands, and he hoped all would go right with me, he said; but nothing ever went right with me after. I took little note ever after of worldly matters: all belonging to me went to rack and ruin. The hand of God was upon me—I could not help myself, nor settle mind nor body to any thing. I heard them say sometimes I was a little touched in

my head: however that might be I cannot say. But at the last I found it was as good for me to give all that was left to my friends, who were better able to manage, and more eager for it than I; and fancying a roving life would agree with me best, I quit the place, taking nothing with me, but resolved to walk the world, and just trust to the charity of good Christians, or die, as it should please God. How I have lived so long, He only knows, and his will be done."

CHAPTER X.

IRISH WIT AND ELOQUENCE.

"WILD wit, invention ever new"—appear in high perfection amongst even the youngest inhabitants of an Irish cottage. The word wit, amongst the lower classes in Ireland, means not only quickness of repartee, but cleverness in action; it implies invention and address, with no slight mixture of cunning; all which is expressed in their dialect by the single word *'cuteness* (acuteness). Examples will give a better notion of this than can be conveyed by any definition.

An Irish boy (a 'cute lad,) saw a train of his companions leading their cars loaded with kishes* of turf coming towards his father's cabin; his father had no turf, and the question was how some should be obtained. To beg he was ashamed; to dig he was unwilling—but his head went to work directly: he took up a turf which had fallen from one of the cars the preceding day, and stuck it on the top of a pole near the cabin. When the cars were passing, he appeared throwing turf at the mark—"Boys!" cried he, "which of ye will hit?" Each leader of the car, as he passed, could not forbear to fling a turf at the mark; the turf fell at the foot of the pole, and when all the cars had passed, there was a heap left sufficient to reward the ingenuity of our little Spartan.

The same 'cuteness which appears in youth continues and improves in old age. When general V—— was quartered in a small town in Ireland, he and his lady were regularly besieged, whenever they got into their carriage, by an old beggar-woman, who kept her post at the door, assailing them daily with fresh importunities and fresh tales of distress. At last the lady's charity, and the general's patience, were nearly exhausted, but their petitioner's wit was still in its pristine vig-

* Baskets.

our. One morning, at the accustomed hour, when the lady was getting into her carriage, the old woman began—"Agh! my lady; success to your ladyship, and success to your honour's honour, this morning, of all days in the year; for sure didn't I dream last night, that her ladyship gave me a pound of tea, and that your honour gave me a pound of tobacco?"

"But, my good woman," said the general, "do not you know, that dreams always go by the rule of contrary?"

"Do they so, plase your honour," rejoined the old woman. "Then it must be your honour that will give me the tea and her ladyship that will give me the tobacco."

The general being of Sterne's opinion, that a bon mot is always worth more than a pinch of snuff, gave the ingenious dreamer the value of her dream.

Innumerable instances might be quoted of the Hibernian genius, not merely for repartee, but for what the Italians call pasquinade. We shall cite only one, which is already so well known in Ireland, that we cannot be found guilty of *publishing* a libel. Over the ostentatious front of a nobleman's house in Dublin, the owner had this motto cut in stone:—

Otium cum dignitate.—Leisure with dignity.

In process of time his lordship changed his residence, or, since we must descend to plebeian language, was committed to Newgate, and immediately there appeared over the front of his apartment his chosen motto as large as the life, in white chalk,

Otium cum dignitate.

Mixed with keen satire, the Irish often show a sort of cool good sense and dry humour, which gives not only effect but value to their impromptus. Of this class is the observation made by the Irish hackney coachman, upon seeing a man of the ton driving four in hand down Bond-street.

"That fellow," said our observer, "looks like a coachman, but drives like a gentleman."

As an instance of humour mixed with sophistry, we beg the reader to recollect the popular story of the Irishman, who was run over by a troop of horse and miraculously escaped unhurt.

"Down upon your knees and thank God, you reprobate," said one of the spectators.

"Thank God! for what? Is it for letting a troop of horse run over me?"

In this speech there is the same sort of humour and sophistry, that appears in the Irishman's celebrated question—"What has posterity done for me that I should do so much for posterity?"

The Irish nation from the highest to the lowest in daily conversation about the ordinary affairs of life, employ a superfluity of wit and metaphor which would be astonishing and unintelligible to a majority of the respectable body of English yeomen. Even the cutters of turf and drawers of whiskey, are orators; even the *cottiers* and *gossoons* speak in trope and figure. Ask an Irish gossoon to go early in the morning on an errand, and he answers,

"I'll be off at the flight of night."

If an Irish cottager would express to his landlord that he wishes for a long lease of his land, he says,

"I would be proud to live on your honour's land as long as grass grows or water runs."

One of our English poets has nearly the same idea.

> "As long as streams in silver mazes run,
> Or spring with annual green renews the grove."

Without the advantages of a classical education the lower Irish sometimes makes similes, that bear a near resemblance to those of the admired poets of antiquity. A loyalist, during the late rebellion, was describing to us the numbers of the rebels who had gathered on one spot, and were dispersed by the king's army,—rallied, and were again put to flight.

"They were," said he, "like swarms of flies on a summer's day, that you brush away with your hand, and still they will be returning."

There is a simile of Homer which literally translated runs thus: "as the numerous troops of flies about a shepherd's cottage in the spring, when the milk moistens the pails, such numbers of Greeks stood in the field against the Trojans." Lord Kaims observes, that it is false taste to condemn such comparisons, for the lowness of the images introduced. In fact, great objects cannot be degraded by comparison with small ones in these similes, because the only point of resemblance is number; the mind instantly perceives this, and therefore requires no other species of similitude.

When we attempt to judge of the genius of the lower classes of the people, we must take care that we are not under the influence of any prejudice of an aristocratic or literary nature. But this is no easy effort of liberality.

"*Agh! Dublin, sweet Jasus be wid you!*" exclaimed a poor Irishman, as he stood on the deck of a vessel, which was carrying him out of the bay of Dublin. The pathos of this poor fellow, will not probably affect delicate sensibility, because he says *wid* instead of *with*, and Jasus instead of Jesus.—Adam Smith is certainly right in his theory, that the sufferings of those in exalted stations have generally most power to command our sympathy. The very same sentiment of sorrow at

leaving his country, which was expressed so awkwardly by the poor Irishman, appears to every reader of taste, exquisitely pathetic from the lips of Mary Queen of Scots.

"Farewell France! Farewell beloved country which I shall never more behold."*

In anger as well as in sorrow the Irishman is eloquent. A gentleman who was lately riding through the county of ——, in Ireland, to canvass, called to ask a vote from a poor man, who was planting willows in a little garden by the road side.

"You have a vote, my good sir, I am told," said the candidate, in an insinuating tone.

The poor man struck the willow which he had in his hand into the ground, and with a deliberate pace came towards the candidate to parley with him.

"Please your honour," said he, gravely, "I have a vote, and I have not a vote."

"How can that be?"

"I will tell you, sir," said he, leaning, or rather lying down slowly upon the back of the ditch facing the road, so that the gentleman who was on horseback could see only his head and arms.

"Sir," said he, "out of this little garden, with my five acres of land and my own labour, I once had a freehold—but I have been robbed of my freehold, and who do you think has robbed me? why, that man!" pointing to his landlord's steward, who stood beside him—"With my own hands I sowed my own ground with oats, and a fine crop I expected—but I never reaped that crop:—not a bushel, no, nor half a bushel did I ever see; for into my little place comes this man, with I don't know how many more, with their shovels and their barrows, and their horses and their cars, and to work they fell, and they ran a road straight through the best part of my land, turning all to heaps of rubbish, and a bad road it was, and a bad time of year to make it!—but where was *I* when he did this? not where I am now," said the orator, raising himself up and standing firm, "not as you see me now, but lying on my back in my bed in a fever. When I got up, I was not able to make my rent out of my land. Besides myself, I had my five children to support. I sold my clothes, and have never been able to buy any since, but such as a recruit could sell, who was in haste to get into regimentals—such clothes as these," said he, looking down at his black rags. "Soon I had nothing to eat—but that's not all.—I am a weaver, sir; for my rent they seized my two looms; then I had nothing to do. But of all this I do not

* Vide Robertson's History of Scotland.

complain.——There was an election some time ago in this county, and a man rode up to me in this garden as you do now, and asked me for my vote, but I refused him, for I was steady to my landlord. The gentleman observed I was a poor man, and asked if I wanted for nothing? but all did not signify, so he rode on gently, and at the corner of the road, within view of my garden, I saw him drop a purse, and I knew by his looking at me, it was on purpose for me to pick it up. After a while he came back, thinking, to be sure, I had taken up the purse and had changed my mind, but he found his purse where he left it. My landlord knew all this, and he promised to see justice done me, but he forgot. Then as for the candidate's lady, before the election nothing was too fair-speaking for me; but afterward, in my distress, when I applied to her to get me a loom, which she could have had from *the Linen Board* by only asking for it, her answer to me was —' I don't know that I shall ever want a vote again in the county.'

"Now, sir," continued he, "when justice is done to me (and no sooner) I shall be glad to assist my landlord or his friend.—I know who *you* are, sir, very well—you bear a good character—success to you! but I have no vote to give to you or any man."

"If I were to attempt to make you any amends for what you have suffered," replied the candidate, "I should do you an injury; it would be said that I had bribed you; but I will repeat your story where it will meet with attention. I cannot however tell it so well as you have told it."

"No, sir," was his answer, "for you cannot feel it as I do."

This is almost in terms, the conclusion of Pope's epistle from Eloisa to Abelard.

"He best can paint them who shall feel them most."

In objurgation and pathetic remonstrancing eloquence,the females of the lower class in Ireland are not inferior to the men. A thin tall woman wrapped in a long cloak, the hood of which was drawn over her head, and shaded her pale face, came to a gentleman to complain of the cruelty of her landlord.

"He is the most hard hearted man alive, so he is, sir," said she; "he has just seized all I have, which, God knows, is little enough! and has driven my cow to pound, the only cow I have, and only dependence I have for a drop of milk to drink; and the cow itself too standing there starving in the pound, for not a wisp of hay would he give to cow or Christian to save their lives, if it was ever so! And the rent for which he is driving me, please your honour, has not been due

but one week; a hard master he is: but these *middle men* are all so, one and all. Oh! if it had but been my lot to be tenant to a *gentleman born*, like your honour, who is the poor man's friend, and the orphan's, and the widow's—the friend of them that have none other. Long life to you! and long may you live to reign over us!—Would you but speak three words to my landlord, to let my cow out of pound, and give me a fortnight's time, that I might see and fatten her to sell against the fair, I could pay him then all honestly, and not be racked entirely, and he would be ashamed to refuse your honour, and afraid to disoblige the like of you, or get your ill will. May the blessing of heaven be upon you, if you'll just send and speak to him three words for the poor woman and widow, that has none other to speak for her in the wide world."

Moved by this lamentable story, the effect of which the woman's whole miserable appearance corroborated and heightened, the gentleman sent immediately for her hard hearted landlord. The landlord appeared; not a gentleman, not a rich man, as the term landlord might denote, but a stout, square, stubbed, thick-limbed, grey-eyed man, who seemed to have come smoking hot from hard labour. The gentleman repeated the charge made against him by the poor widow, and mildly remonstrated on his cruelty: the man heard all that was said with a calm but unmoved countenance.

"And now have you done?" said he, turning to the woman, who had recommenced her lamentations. "Look at her standing there, sir. It's easy for her to put on her long cloak, and to tell her long story, and to make her poor mouth to your honour; but if you are willing to hear, I'll tell you what she is, and what I am. She is one that has none but herself in this world to provide for; she is one that is able to afford herself a glass of whiskey when she pleases, and she pleases it often; she is one that never denies herself the bit of *staggering bob** when in season; she is one that has a snug house well thatched to live in all the year round, and nothing to do or nothing that she does, and this is the way of her life, and this is what she is.—And what am I?—I am the father of eight children, and I have a wife and myself to provide for. I am a man that is at hard labour of one kind or another from sunrise to sunset. The straw that thatched the house she lives in, I brought two miles on my back; the walls of the house she lives in I built with my own hands; I did the same by five other houses, and they are all sound and dry, and good to live in, summer or winter. I set them for rent to put bread into my children's mouth, and after all I cannot get it!

* Slink calf.

And to support my eight children, and my wife, and myself, what have I in this world," cried he, striding suddenly with colossal firmness upon his sturdy legs, and raising to Heaven arms which looked like foreshortenings of the limbs of Hercules—" What have *I* in this wide world but these four bones ?"*

No provocation could have worked up a phlegmatic English countryman to this pitch of eloquence. He never suffers his anger to evaporate in idle figures of speech : it is always concentrated in a few words, which he repeats in reply to every argument, persuasive or invective, that can be employed to irritate or to assuage his wrath. We recollect having once been present at a scene between an English gentleman and a churchwarden, whose feelings were grievously hurt by the disturbance that had been given to certain bones in levelling a wall, which separated the churchyard from the pleasure ground of the lord of the manor. The bones belonged, as the churchwarden believed or averred, to his great great grandmother, though how they were identified it might be difficult to explain to an indifferent judge; yet we are to suppose, that the confirmation of the suspicion was strong and satisfactory to the party concerned. The pious great great grandson's feelings were all in arms, but *indignation* did not inspire him with a single poetic idea or expression. In his eloquence, indeed, there was the principal requisite, action: in reply to all that could be said, he repeatedly struck his long oak stick perpendicularly upon the floor, and reiterated these words—

" It's death, sir ! death by the law !—It's sacrilege, sir ! sacrilege by act of parliament !—It's death, sir ! death by the law ! and the law I'll have of him, for it's lawful to have the law."

This was the whole range of his ideas, even when the passions had tumbled them all out of their dormitories.

Innumerable fresh instances of Irish eloquence and wit crowd upon our recollection, but we forbear—The examples we have cited are taken from real life, and given without alteration or embellishment.

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* This was taken down a few minutes after it had been spoken.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BROGUE.

HAVING proved by a perfect syllogism, that the Irish must blunder, we might rest satisfied with our labours; but there are minds of so perverse a sort, that they will not yield their understandings to the torturing power of syllogism.

It may be waste of time to address ourselves to persons of such a cast, we shall therefore change our ground, and adapt our arguments to the level of vulgar capacities. Much of the comic effect of Irish bulls, or of such speeches as are mistaken for bulls, has depended upon the tone or *brogue*, as it is called, with which they are uttered. The first Irish blunders that we hear, are made or repeated in this peculiar tone, and afterward, from the power of association, whenever we hear the tone, we expect the blunder. Now there is little danger, that the Irish should be cured of their brogue; and consequently there is no great reason to apprehend, that we should cease to think or call them blunderers.

Of the powerful effect of any peculiarity of pronunciation to prepossess the mind against the speaker, nay even to excite dislike amounting to antipathy, we have an instance attested by an eye-witness, or rather an ear-witness.

"In the year 1755," says the Rev. James Adams, "I attended a public disputation in a foreign university, when at least 400 Frenchmen literally hissed a grave and learned *English* doctor, not by way of insult, but irresistibly provoked by the quaintness of the repetition of *sh*. The thesis was, the concurrence of God *in actionibus viciosis*: the whole hall resounded with the hissing cry of *sh*, and its continual occurrence in *actio*, *actione*, *viciosa*, *&c.*"

It is curious, that Shiboleth should so long continue a criterion among nations!

What must have been the degree of irritation, that could so far get the better of the politeness of 400 Frenchmen, as to make them hiss in the days of *l'ancien regime!* The dread of being the object of that species of antipathy or ridicule, which is excited by unfashionable peculiarity of accent, has induced many of the *misguided* natives of Ireland to affect, what they imagine to be the English pronunciation. They are seldom successful in this attempt, for they generally overdo the business. We are told by Theophrastus, that a *barba-*

rian, who had taken some pains to attain the true Attic dialect, was discovered to be a foreigner by his speaking the Attic dialect with a greater degree of precision and purity, than was usual amongst the Athenians themselves. To avoid the imputation of committing barbarisms, people sometimes run into solecisms, which are yet more ridiculous. Affectation is always more ridiculous than ignorance.

There are Irish ladies who, ashamed of their country, betray themselves, by mincing out their abjuration, by calling tables *teebles*, and chairs *cheers !* To such renegadoes we prefer the honest quixotism of a modern champion* for the Scottish accent, who boldly asserting, that " the broad dialect rises above reproach, scorn and laughter," enters the lists, as he says of himself, in Tartan dress and armour, and throws down the gauntlet to the most prejudiced antagonist—" How weak is prejudice !" pursues this patriotic enthusiast, " the sight of the highland kelt, the flowing plaid, the buskin'd leg, provokes my antagonist to laugh !—Is this dress ridiculous in the eyes of reason and common sense ? No : nor is the dialect of speech : both are characteristics and national distinctions.

" The arguments of general vindication," continues he, " rise powerful before my sight, like the highland bands in full array. A louder strain of apologetic speech swells my words. What if it should rise high as the unconquered summits of Scotia's hills, and call back with voice sweet as Caledonian song, the days of ancient Scottish heroes, or attempt the powerful speech of the Latian orator or his of Greece ! The subject, methinks, would well accord with the attempt : *Cupidum, Scotia optima, vires deficiunt.* I leave this to the *king of songs.* Dunbar and Dunkeld, Douglas in *virgilian* strains, and later poets, Ramsay, Ferguson and Burns, awake from your graves, you have already immortalized the Scotch dialect in raptured melody ! Lend me your golden target and well pointed spear, that I may victoriously pursue, to the extremity of South Britain, reproachful Ignorance and Scorn still lurking there : —Let impartial Candour seize their usurped throne.—Great then is the birth of this national dialect," &c.

So far so good. We have some sympathy with the rhapsodist, whose enthusiasm kindles at the names of Allan Ramsay and of Burns ; nay, we are willing to hear (with a grain of allowance,) that " the manly eloquence of the Scotch bar affords a singular pleasure to the candid English hearer, and gives merit and dignity to the noble speakers, who retain so

* James Adams, S. R. E. S. author of a book entitled " The Pronunciation of the English Language vindicated from imputed Anomaly and Caprice, with an Appendix on the Dialects of human Speech in all Countries, and an analytical Discussion and Vindication of the Dialect of Scotland."

much of their own dialect and tempered propriety of English sounds, that they may be emphatically termed *British orators.*" But we confess that we lose our patient decorum, and are almost provoked to laughter, when our philological Quixote seriously sets about to prove, that Adam and Eve spoke broad Scotch in Paradise. But let us check our laughter, for our hero will not even permit us to smile at the learned etymologist, who in the time of Queen Elizabeth wrote a folio to prove, that pure Welsh was the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise. How it could be both broad Scotch and pure Welsh we know not; but we must not, according to our grave scholiast, let " loose those muscles, which exhibit the impression of ignorance joined with surprise, for that is the source of the weakest passion in man—laughter which is no confutation of error."

How angry has this grave patriot reason to be with his ingenious countryman Beattie,* the celebrated champion of *Truth*, who acknowledges, that he never could, when a boy or man, look at a certain translation of Ajax's speech into one of the vulgar Scotch dialects without laughing!

We shall now with boldness, similar to that of the Scotch champion, try the risible muscles of our English readers; we are not, indeed, inclined to go quite such lengths as he has gone: he insists, that the Scotch dialect ought to be adopted all over England; we are only going candidly to confess, that we think the Irish, in general, speak *better English* than is commonly spoken by the Natives of England. To limit this proposition so as to make it appear less absurd, we should observe, that we allude to the lower classes of the people in both countries. In some counties in Ireland, a few of the poorest labourers and cottagers do not understand English, they speak only Irish, as in Wales there are vast numbers who speak only Welsh; but amongst those who speak English we find fewer vulgarisms, than amongst the same rank of persons in England. The English which they speak is chiefly such as has been traditional in their families from the time of the early settlers in the island. During the reign of Elizabeth and the reign of Shakspeare, numbers of English migrated to Ireland; and whoever attends to the phraseology of the lower Irish may, at this day, hear many of the phrases and expressions used by Shakspeare. Their vocabulary has been preserved nearly in its pristine purity since that time, because they have not had intercourse with those counties in England, which have made for themselves a jargon, unlike to any lan-

* Vide Illustrations on Sublimity, in his Essays.

guage under Heaven. The Irish *brogue* is a great and shameful defect, but it does not render the English language absolutely unintelligible. There are but a few variations of the brogue, such as the long and the short, the thady brogue and paddy brogue, which differ much in tone, and but little in phraseology; but in England, almost all of our fifty-two counties have peculiar vulgarisms, dialects, and brogues, unintelligible to their neighbours. As Herodotus tells us, that some of the nations of Greece, though they used the same language, spoke it so differently, that they could not understand each other's conversation. This is literally the case at present between the provincial inhabitants of remote parts of England. Indeed the language peculiar to the metropolis, or the *cockney* dialect, is proverbially ridiculous. The Londoners, who look down with contempt upon all, that have not been *bred and born* within the sound of Bow, talk with unconscious absurdity of *w*eal and *w*inegar, and *v*ine and *v*indors, and ide*a*rs, and ask you '*ow* you do? and '*ave ye bin taking* the *h*air in 'yde park, and '*as* your 'orse 'ad any *h*oats, &c.; aspirating always where they should not, and never aspirating where they should.

The *Zummerzetzheer* dialect full of broad *oos* and eternal *zeds*, supplies never failing laughter when brought upon the stage. Even a cockney audience relishes the broad pronunciation of John Moody, in the Journey to London, or of Sim, in Wild Oats.

The cant of Suffolk, the vulgarisms of Shropshire, the uncouth phraseology of the three ridings of Yorkshire, amaze and bewilder foreigners, who perhaps imagine, that they do not understand English, when they are in company with those who cannot speak it. The patois of Languedoc and Champagne, such as "*Mein fis sest ai bai via*," Mon fils c'est un beau veau, exercises, it is true, the ingenuity of travellers, and renders many scenes of Moliere and Marivaux difficult, if not unintelligible, to those who have never resided in the French provinces; but no French patois is more unintelligible than the following specimen of *Tummas and Meary's* Lancashire dialogue.

Thomas. "Whau, but I startit up to goa to th' tits, on slurr'd deawn to th' lower part o' th' heymough, on by th' maskins, lord! whot dust think? boh leet hump stridd'n up o' summot ot felt meety heury, on it startit weh meh on its back, deawn th' lower part o' th' mough it jumpt, crost th' leath, eawt o' th' dur wimmey it took, on into th' weturing poo, os if th' dule o' Hell had driv'n it, on there it threw meh en, or I feel off, I connaw tell whether, for th' life o' meh, into the poo."

Mary. "Whoo-wo, whoo-wo, whoo! whot, ith neme o' God! widneh sey?"

Thomas. "If it wur naw Owd Nick, he wur th' orderer on't, to be shure ***. Weh mitch powlering I geet eawt o' th' poo, 'lieve* meh, as to list, I could na tell whether i'r in a sleawm or wak'n, till eh groapt ot meh een; I crope under a wough and stode like o' gawmbling,† or o parfit neatril, till welly-day," &c.

Let us now listen to a conversation which we hope will not be quite so unintelligible.

CHAPTER XII.

BATH COACH CONVERSATION.

In one of the coaches, which travel between Bath and London, an Irish, a Scotch, and an English gentleman happened to be passengers. They were well informed and well bred; had seen the world, had lived in good company, and were consequently superior to local and national prejudice. As their conversation was illustrative of our subject, we shall make no apology for relating it. We pass the usual preliminary compliments, and the observations upon the weather and the roads. The Irish gentleman first started a more interesting subject—the Union; its probable advantages and disadvantages were fully discussed, and, at last, the Irishman said, "Whatever our political opinions may be, there is one wish in which we shall all agree, that the union may make us better acquainted with one another."

"It is surprising," said the Englishman, "how ignorant we English in general are of Ireland; to be sure we do not now, as in the times of Bacon and Spencer, believe that Wild Irishmen have wings, nor do we all of us give credit to Mr. Twiss's assertion, that if you look at an Irish lady, she answers "*port, if you please.*"

Scotchman.—"That traveller seems to be almost as liberal, as he who defined *oats*—food for horses in England, and for men in Scotland: such illiberal notions die away of themselves."

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* The glossary to the Lancashire dialect informs us, that '*lieve me* comes from *Beleemy*, believe me: from *Belamy*, my good friend, *old French*.

† Gawmbling (*Anglo-Saxon* gawmless,) stupid.

Irishman.—" Or they are contradicted by more liberal travellers. I am sure my country has great obligations to the gallant English and Scotch military, not only for so readily assisting to defend and quiet us, but for spreading in England a juster notion of Ireland. Within these few months, I suppose more real knowledge of the state and manners of that kingdom has been diffused in England by their means, than had been obtained during a whole century."

Scotchman.—" Indeed, I do not recollect having read any author of note, who has given me a notion of Ireland since Spencer and Davies, except Arthur Young."

Englishman.—" What little knowledge I have of Ireland has been drawn more from observation than from books. I remember when I first went over there, I did not expect to see twenty trees in the whole island; I imagined that I should have nothing to drink but whiskey, that I should have nothing to eat but potatoes, that I should sleep in mud-walled cabins, that I should, when awake, hear nothing but the Irish howl, the Irish brogue, Irish answers and Irish bulls; and that if I smiled at any of these things, a hundred pistols would fly from their holsters to *give* or *demand* satisfaction. But experience taught me better things: I found that the stories I had heard were *tales of other times.* Their hospitality indeed, continues to this day."

Irishman—" It does, I believe; but of later days, as we have been honoured with the visits of a greater number of foreigners, our hospitality has become less extravagant."

Englishman.—" Not less agreeable; Irish hospitality, I speak from experience, does not now consist merely in pushing about the bottle; the Irish are convivial, but their conviviality is seasoned with wit and humour, they have plenty of good conversation as well as good cheer for their guests; and they not only have wit themselves, but they love it in others: they can take as well as give a joke. I never lived with a more good humoured, generous, open hearted people, than the Irish."

Irishman.—" I wish Englishmen, in general, were half as partial to poor Ireland as you are, sir."

Englishman.—" Or rather you wish that they knew the country as well, and then they would do it as much justice."

Irishman.—" You do it something more than justice, I fear. There are little peculiarities in my countrymen, which will long be justly the subject of ridicule in England."

Scotchman.—" Not among well bred and well informed people; those who have seen or read of great varieties of customs and manners, are never apt to laugh at all that may differ from their own. As the sensible author of the government of

the tongue says,—' Half witted people are always the bitterest revilers.' "

Irishman.—" You are very indulgent, gentlemen; but in spite of all your politeness you must allow, or, at least, I must confess, that there are little defects in the Irish government of the tongue, at which even *whole* witted people must laugh."

Scotchmen.—" The well educated people, in all countries I believe, escape the particular accent, and avoid the idiom that are characteristic of the vulgar."

Irishman.—" But even when we escape Irish brogue, we cannot escape Irish bulls."

Englishman.—" You need not say *Irish* bulls with such emphasis, for bulls are not peculiar to Ireland. I have been informed, by a person of unquestionable authority, that there is a town in Germany, Hirschau in the Upper Palatinate, where the inhabitants are famous for making bulls."

Irishman.—" I am truly glad to hear we have companions in disgrace. Numbers certainly lessen the effect of ridicule as well as of shame: but after all, the Irish idiom is peculiarly unfortunate, for it leads perpetually to blunder."

Scotchman.—" I have heard the same remarked of the Hebrew. I am told, that the Hebrew and Irish idiom are much alike."

Irishman (*laughing.*)—" That is a great comfort to us, certainly, particularly to those amongst us who are fond of tracing our origin up to the remotest antiquity; but still there are many who would willingly give up the honour of this high alliance, to avoid its inconveniences; for my own part, if I could ensure myself and my countrymen from all future danger of making bulls and blunders, I would this instant give up all Hebrew roots; and even the Ogham character itself I would renounce, ' to make assurance doubly sure.' "

Englishman.—" ' To make *assurance doubly sure.*'—Now there is an example in our great Shakspeare of what I have often observed, that we English allow our poets and ourselves a license of speech that we deny to our Hibernian neighbours. If an Irishman, instead of Shakspeare, had talked of making ' assurance doubly sure,' we should have asked how that could be. The vulgar in England are too apt to catch at every slip of the tongue made by Irishmen. I remember once being present, when an Irish nobleman, of talents and literature, was actually hissed from the hustings at a Middlesex election, because in his speech he happened to say,—' We have laid the root to the axe of the tree of liberty,' instead of we have laid the axe to the root of the tree."

Scotchman.—" A lapsus linguæ, that might have been made by the greatest orators ancient or modern, by Cicero or Chatham, by Burke or by ' the fluent Murray.' "

Englishman.—" Upon another occasion I have heard, that an Irish orator was silenced with ' *inextinguishable* laughter,' merely for saying ' I am sorry to hear my honourable friend stand mute.' "

Scotchman.—" If I am not mistaken, that very same Irish orator made an allusion, at which no one could laugh. ' The protection,' said he, ' which Britain affords to Ireland, in the day of adversity, is like that which the oak affords to the ignorant countryman, who flies to it for shelter in the storm; it draws down upon his head the lightning of Heaven :' may be I do not repeat the words exactly, but I could not forget the idea."

Englishman.—" I would with all my heart bear the ridicule of a hundred blunders for the honour of having made such a simile; after all, his saying ' I am sorry to hear my honourable friend stand *mute*,' if it be a bull, is justified by Homer; one of the charms in the cestus of Venus is,

" *Silence that speaks*, and eloquence of eyes."

Scotchman.—" *Silence that speaks*, sir, is, I am afraid, an English, not a Grecian charm. It is not in the Greek; it is one of those beautiful liberties, which Mr. Pope has taken with his original. But silence that speaks can be found in France as well as in England. Voltaire in his chef d'œuvre, his Œdipus, makes Jocasta say,

" Tout *parle* contre nous jusqu' à notre *silence*."*

Englishman.—" And in our own Milton, Sampson Agonistes makes as good, indeed a better bull, for he not only makes the mute speak, but speak loud.

" The deeds, themselves, tho' *mute*, *spoke loud* the doer."

And in Paradise Lost we have, to speak in *fashionable* language, two *famous* bulls. Talking of Satan, Milton says,

" God, and his son except,
Created thing, nought valued he nor shunn'd."

And speaking of Adam and Eve, and their sons and daughters, he confounds them all together, in a manner, for which any Irishman would have been laughed to scorn.

" Adam, the goodliest man of men since born,
His sons; the fairest of her daughters Eve."

Yet Addison, who notices these blunders, calls them only little blemishes."

Scotchman.—" He does so: and he quotes Horace, who tells us we should impute such venial errors to a pardonable inadvertency; and, as I recollect, Addison makes another

* Every thing speaks against us, even our silence.

very just remark, that the ancients, who were actuated by a spirit of candour, not of cavilling, invented a variety of figures of speech, on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature."

"Really, gentlemen," interrupted the Hibernian, who had sat all this time in silence that *spoke* his grateful sense of the politeness of his companions; "you will put the finishing stroke to my obligations to you, if you will prove that the ancient figures of speech were invented to palliate Irish blunders."

Englishman.—"No matter for what purpose they were invented, if we can make so good a use of them we shall be satisfied, especially if you are pleased. I will, however, leave the burden of the proof upon my friend here, who has detected me already in quoting from Pope's Iliad instead of Homer's. I am sure he will manage the ancient figures of rhetoric better than I should; however, if I can fight behind his shield I shall not shun the combat."

Scotchman.—"I stand corrected for quoting Greek. Now I will not go to Longinus for my tropes and figures; I have just met with a little book on the subject, which I put into my pocket to day, intending to finish it on my journey, but I have been better employed."

He drew from his pocket a book called 'Deinology, or the Union of Reason and Elegance.'—"Look!" said he, "look at this long list of tropes and figures, amongst them we could find apologies for every species of Irish bulls; but, in mercy, I will select, from 'the twenty chief and most moving figures of speech,' only the oxymoron, as it is a favourite with Irish orators. In the oxymoron contradictions meet: to reconcile these, Irish ingenuity delights. I will further spare four out of the seven figures of less note: emphasis, enallage, and the hysteron proteron you must have, because emphasis graces Irish diction, enallage unbinds it from strict grammatical fetters, and hysteron proteron allows it sometimes to put the cart before the horse. Of the eleven grammatical figures, Ireland delights chiefly in the antimeria, or changing one part of speech for another, and in the ellipsis or defect. Of the remaining long list of figures, the Irish are particularly disposed to the epizeuxis, as 'indeed, indeed——at all, at all,' and antanaclasis or double meaning. The tautotes, or repetition of the same thing, is, I think, full as common amongst the English. The hyperbole and catachresis are so nearly related to a bull, that I shall dwell upon them with pleasure. You must listen to the definition of a catachresis—'A catachresis is the boldest of any trope. *Necessity makes it borrow and employ an expression or term, contrary to the thing it means to express.*'"

"Upon my word this is something like a description of an Irish bull," interrupted the Hibernian.

Scotchman.—"For instance, it has been said *Equitare in arundine longâ*—to ride on horseback on a stick. Reason condemns the contradiction, but necessity has allowed it, and use has made it intelligible. The same trope is employed in the following metaphorical expression—the seeds of the Gospel have been *watered* with the *blood* of the martyrs."

Englishman—"That does seem an absurdity, I grant, but you know how great orators *trample on impossibilities.*"*

Scotchman.—"And great poets *get the better of them.* You recollect Shakspeare says,

> "Now bid me run,
> And I will strive with things *impossible,*
> Yea, *get the better of them.*"

Englishman.—"And Corneille, in the Cid, I believe, makes his hero a compliment upon his having performed impossibilities—'Vos mains seules ont le droit de vaincre un invincible.'"*

Scotchman.—"Ay, that would be a bull in an Irishman, but it is only an hyperbole in a Frenchman."

Irishman.—"Indeed this line of Corneille's *out hyperboles* the hyperbole, considered in any but a prophetic light; as a prophecy, it exactly foretells the taking of Bonaparte's *invincible* standard by the glorious forty-second regiment of the British: 'Your hands alone *have a right* to vanquish the invincible.'—By the by, the phrase *ont le droit* cannot, I believe, be literally translated into English, but the Scotch and Irish —*have a right*——translates it exactly. But do not let me interrupt my country's defence, gentlemen; I am heartily glad to find, that Irish blunderers may shelter themselves in such good company in the ancient sanctuary of the hyperbole. But I am afraid you must deny admittance to the poor mason, who said, 'this house will stand as long as the world, and longer.'"

Scotchman.—"Why should we 'shut the gates of mercy' upon him, when we pardon his betters for more flagrant sins; for instance, Mr. Pope, who in his Essay on Criticism, makes a blunder, or rather uses an hyperbole, stronger than that of your poor Irish mason.

> "When first young Maro in his noble mind
> A work *t' outlast immortal* Rome designed."

And to give you a modern case, I lately heard an English shopkeeper say to a lady in recommendation of his goods,

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* Lord Chatham.

† Your hands alone have a right to conquer the *unconquerable.*

'Ma'am, it will wear for ever, and make you a petticoat afterwards."

Irishman.—" Upon my word I did not think you could have found a match for the mason; but what will you say to my countryman, who, on meeting an acquaintance, accosted him with this ambiguous compliment—'When first I saw you I thought it was you, but now I see it is your brother.'"

Scotchman.—" If I were not afraid you would take me for a pedant, I should quote a sentence from Cicero, that is not far behind this blunder."

Irishman.—" I can take you for nothing but a friend—pray let us have the latin."

Scotchman.—" It is one of Cicero's compliments to Cæsar,—'Qui, cum ipse imperator in toto imperio populi Romani unus esset, esse me alterum passus est.'*—Perhaps," continued the Scotchman, "my way of pronouncing latin sounds strangely to you, gentlemen?"

Irishman.—" And perhaps ours would be unintelligible to Cicero himself, if he were to overhear us; I fancy we are all so far from right, that we need not dispute about degrees of wrong."

The coach stopped at this instant, and the conversation was interrupted.

CHAPTER XIII.

BATH COACH CONVERSATION.

After our travellers had dined, the conversation was renewed by the English gentleman's repeating Goldsmith's celebrated lines on Burke—

> "Who too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
> And thought of convincing, whilst they thought of dining,
> In short 'twas his fate unemployed or in place, sir,
> To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor."

"What humour and wit there are in that poem of Goldsmith! and where is there any thing equal to his 'Traveller?'"

Irishman.—" Yet this is the man who used to be the butt of the company for his bulls."

* And when Cæsar was the *only emperor* within the dominion of Rome, he suffered me to be *another*.

Englishman.—" No, not for his bulls, but for *blurting* out opinions in conversation, that could not stand the test of Dr. Johnson's critical powers. But what would become of the freedom of wit and humour, if every word that came out of our mouths were subject to the tax of a professed critic's censure, or if every sentence were to undergo a logical examination? It would be well for Englishmen, if they were a little more inclined, like your open-hearted countrymen, to *blurt* out their opinions freely."

Scotchman.—" I cannot forgive Dr. Johnson for calling Goldsmith an inspired idiot; I confess I see no idiotism, but much inspiration in his works."

Irishman.—" But we must remember, that if Johnson did laugh at Goldsmith, he would let no one else laugh at him, and he was his most sincere and active friend. The world would perhaps, never have seen the Vicar of Wakefield, if Johnson had not recommended it to a bookseller; and Goldsmith might have died in jail, if the Doctor had not got him a hundred pounds for it, when poor Goldsmith did not know it was worth a shilling. When we recollect this, we must forgive the Doctor for calling him, in jest, an inspired idiot."

Scotchman.—" Especially as Goldsmith has wit enough, to bear him up against a thousand such jests."

Englishman.—" It is curious to observe how nearly wit and absurdity are allied. We may forgive the genius of Ireland if he sometimes

> 'Leap his light courser o'er the bounds of taste.'

Even English genius is not always to be restrained within the strict limits of common sense. For instance, Young is witty when he says,

> 'How would a miser startle, to be told
> Of such a wonder as insolvent gold!'

But Johnson is, I am afraid, absurd, when he says—

> 'Turn from the glittering bribe your scornful eye,
> Nor sell for gold what gold can never buy.'

"One case to be sure must be excepted," said the Irishman; "a patriot may sell his reputation, and the purchaser get nothing by it. But, gentlemen, I have just recollected an example of an Irish bull in which are all the happy requisites, incongruity, confusion, and laughable confusion, both in thought and expression. When Sir Richard Steele was asked how it happened, that his countrymen made so many bulls, he replied—'It is the effect of climate, sir; if an Englishman were born in Ireland, he would make as many.'"

Scotchman.—" This is an excellent bull, I allow, but I think I can match it."

Englishman.—" And if he can, you will allow yourself to be fairly vanquished ?"

Irishman.—" Most *willingly.*"

Scotchman.—" Then I shall owe my victory to our friend, Dr. Johnson, the Leviathan of English literature. In his celebrated preface to Shakspeare he says, that ' he has not only shown human nature, as it acts in real exigences, but as it *would be found in situations to which it cannot be exposed.*' These are his own words, I think I remember them accurately."

The English gentleman smiled, and our Hibernian acknowledged, that the Scotchman had fairly gained the victory.—" My friends," added he, " as I cannot pretend to be ' convinced against my will,' I certainly am not ' of the same opinion still.' But stay, there are such things as practical bulls. Did you never hear of the Irishman, who ordered a painter to draw his picture, and to represent him standing behind a tree ?"

Englishman.—" No; but I have heard the very same story told of an Englishman. The dealers in *good jokes* give them first to one nation and then to another, first to one celebrated character and then to another, as it suits the demand and fashion of the day: just as our printsellers, with a few touches, change the portrait of General Washington into the head of the King of France, and a capital print of Sir Joshua Reynolds into a striking likeness of *the Monster.*

" But I can give you an instance of a practical bull that is not only indisputably English, but was made by one of the greatest men that England ever produced, Sir Isaac Newton, who, after he had made a large hole in his study door for his cat to creep through, made a small hole beside it, for the kitten. You will acknowledge, sir, that this is a good practical bull."

" Pardon me," said the Hibernian, " we have still some miles farther to go, and if you will give me leave, I will relate ' an Hibernian tale,' which exemplifies some of the opinions held in this conversation."

The Scotch and English gentlemen begged to hear the story, and he began in the following manner.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE IRISH INCOGNITO.

Sir John Bull was a native of Ireland, *bred* and *born* in the city of Cork. His real name was Phelim O'Mooney, and he was by profession a *stocah* or walking gentleman; that is, a person who is too proud to earn his bread, and too poor to have bread without earning it. He had always been told, that none of his ancestors had ever been in trade or business of any kind, and he resolved, when a boy, never to *demean* himself and family, as his elder brother had done, by becoming a rich merchant. When he grew up to be a young man, he kept this spirited resolution, as long as he had a relation or friend in the world, who would let him hang upon them; but when he was shaken off by all, what could he do but go into business; he chose the most genteel, however—he became a wine merchant. I'm *only* a wine merchant, said he to himself, and that is next door to being nothing at all. His brother furnished his cellars; and Mr. Phelim O'Mooney, upon the strength of the wine that he had in his cellars, and of the money he expected to make of it, immediately married a wife, set up a gig, and gave excellent dinners to men who were ten times richer than he even ever *expected* to be. In return for these excellent dinners, his new friends bought all their wine from Mr. O'Mooney, and never paid for it; he lived upon credit himself, and gave all his friends credit, till he became a bankrupt. Then nobody came to dine with him, and every body found out that he had been very imprudent; and he was obliged to sell his gig, but not before it had broken his wife's neck; so that when accounts came to be finally settled, he was not much worse than when he began the world, the loss falling upon his creditors, and he being as he observed, 'free to begin life again, with the advantage of being once more a bachelor.' He was such a good natured, free hearted fellow, that every body liked him, even his creditors. His wife's relations made up the sum of five hundred pounds for him, and his brother offered to take him into his firm as partner; but O'Mooney preferred, he said, going to try, or rather to make, his fortune in England, as he did not doubt but he should by marriage, being, as he did not scruple to acknowledge, a personable, clever looking man, and a great favourite with the sex.

My last wife I married for love, my next I expect will do the same by me, and of course the money must come on her side this time, said our hero, half jesting, half in earnest. His elder and wiser brother, the merchant, whom he still held in more than sufficient contempt, ventured to hint some slight objections to this scheme of Phelim's seeking fortune in England. He observed that so many had gone upon this plan already, that there was rather a prejudice in England against Irish adventurers.

"This could not affect *him* any ways," Phelim replied; "because he did not mean to appear in England as an Irishman at all."

"How then?"

"As an Englishman, since that is most agreeable."

"How can that be?"

"Who should hinder it?"

His brother hesitatingly said—"Yourself."

"Myself!—What part of myself? Is it my tongue?—You'll acknowledge, brother, that I do not speak with the brogue."

It was true, that Phelim did not speak with any Irish brogue; his mother was an English woman, and he had lived much with the English officers in Cork, and he had studied and imitated their manner of speaking so successfully, that no one, merely by his accent, could have guessed that he was an Irishman.

"Hey! brother, I say!" continued Phelim, in a triumphant English tone; "I never was taken for an Irishman in my life. Colonel Broadman told me the other day, I spoke English better than the English themselves; that he should take me for an Englishman, in any part of the known world, the moment I opened my lips. You must allow, that not the smallest particle of brogue is discernable on my tongue."

His brother allowed, that not the smallest particle of brogue was to be discerned upon Phelim's tongue, but feared that some Irish idiom might be perceived in his conversation—And then the name of O'Mooney!

"O, as to that, I need not trouble an act of parliament, or even a king's letter, just to change my name for a season; at the worst I can travel and appear incognito."

"Always?"

"No—only just till I'm upon good terms with the lady——Mrs. Phelim O'Mooney that is to be, God willing—Never fear, nor shake your head, brother—*you* men of business are out of this line, and not proper judges: I beg your pardon for saying so; but as you are my own brother, and nobody by, you'll excuse me."

His brother did excuse him, but continued silent for some minutes; he was pondering upon the means of persuading Phelim to give up this scheme.

"I would lay you any wager, my dear Phelim," said he, "that you could not continue four days, in England, incognito."

"Done!" cried Phelim. "Done for a hundred pounds; done for a thousand pounds, and welcome."

"But if you lose, how will you pay?"

"Faith! that's the last thing I thought of—being sure of winning."

"Then you will not object to any mode of payment I shall propose."

"None—only remembering always, that I was a bankrupt last week, and shall be little better till I'm married; but then I'll pay you honestly, if I lose."

"No, if you lose I must be paid before that time, my good sir," said his brother, laughing. "My bet is this; I will lay you one hundred guineas, that you do not remain four days in England incognito: be upon honour with me, and promise that if you lose, you will, instead of laying down a hundred guineas, come back immediately, and settle quietly again to business."

The word *business* was always odious to our hero's proud ears; but he thought himself so secure of winning his wager, that he willingly bound himself in a penalty, which he believed would never become due; and his generous brother, at parting, made the bet still more favourable, by allowing that Phelim should not be deemed the loser, unless he was, in the course of the first four days after he touched English ground, detected eight times in being an Irishman.

"Eight times!" cried Phelim. "Good by to a hundred guineas, brother, you may say."

"You may say," echoed his brother, and so they parted.

Mr. Phelim O'Mooney the next morning sailed from Cork harbour with a prosperous gale, and with a confidence in his own success, which supplied the place of auspicious omens. He embarked at Cork, to go by long sea to London, and was driven into Deal, where Julius Cæsar once landed before him, and with the same resolution to see and conquer. It was early in the morning. Having been very sea sick he was impatient, as soon as he got into the inn, for his breakfast. He was shown into a room where three ladies were waiting to go by the stage: his air of easy confidence was the best possible introduction.

"Would any of the company choose eggs?" said the waiter.

"I never touch an egg for my share," said O'Mooney, carelessly; he knew that it was supposed to be an Irish custom to eat eggs at breakfast; and when the malicious waiter afterward set a plate full of eggs in salt upon the table, our hero magnanimously abstained from them; he even laughed heartily at a story told by one of the ladies of an Hibernian at Buxton, who declared, that 'no English hen ever laid a fresh egg.'

O'Mooney got through breakfast much to his own satisfaction, and to that of the ladies, whom he had taken a proper occasion to call the *three graces*, and whom he had informed, that he was an *old* baronet of an English family, and that his name was Sir John Bull. The youngest of the graces civilly observed, "that whatever else he might be, she should never have taken him for an *old* baronet." The lady who made this speech was pretty; but O'Mooney had penetration enough to discover, in the course of the conversation, that she and her companions were far from being divinities: his three graces were a green grocer's wife, a tallow chandler's widow, and a milliner. When he found that these ladies were likely to be his companions, if he were to travel in the coach, he changed his plan, and ordered a postchaise and four.

O'Mooney was not in danger of making any vulgar Irish blunders in paying his bill at an inn. No landlord or waiter could have suspected him, especially as he always left them to settle the matter first, and then looked over the bill and money with a careless gentility, saying,—"Very right," or "very well, sir," wisely calculating, that it was better to lose a few shillings on the road, than to lose a hundred pounds by the risk of Hibernian miscalculation.

Whilst the chaise was getting ready, he went to the custom house to look after his baggage. He found a red hot countryman of his own there, roaring about four and fourpence, and fighting the battle of his trunks, in which, he was ready to make affidavit, there was not, nor never had been any thing contraband; and when the customhouse officer replied, by pulling out of one of them a piece of Irish poplin, the Hibernian fell immediately upon the Union, which he swore was Disunion, as the customhouse officers managed it. Sir John Bull appeared to much advantage all this time, maintaining a dignified silence; from his quiet appearance and deportment, the customhouse officers took it for granted, that he was an Englishman.—"He was in no hurry—he begged *that* gentleman's business might be settled first—he would wait the officer's leisure, and as he spoke, he played so dexterously with half a guinea between his fingers, as to make it visible only where he wished. The customhouse officer was his humble servant immediately; but the Hibernian would

have been his enemy, if he had not conciliated him by observing—" that even Englishmen must allow there was something very like a bull, in professing to make a complete identification of the two kingdoms, whilst, at the same time, certain regulations continued in full force to divide the countries by art, even more than the British channel does by nature."

Sir John talked so plausibly, and, above all, so candidly and coolly on Irish and English politics, that the customhouse officer conversed with him, for a quarter of an hour, without guessing of what country he was, till, in an unlucky moment, Phelim's heart got the better of his head. Joining in the praises bestowed by all parties on the conduct of a distinguished patriot of his own country, he, in the height of his enthusiasm, inadvertently called him *the speaker*.

" *The Speaker!*" said the officer.

" Yes, the speaker—*our* speaker !" cried Phelim, with exultation. He was not aware how he had betrayed himself, till the officer smiled and said—

" Sir, I really never should have found out that you were an Irishman, but from the manner in which you named your countrymen, who is as highly thought of by all parties in this country as in yours; your enthusiam does honour to your heart."

" And to my head, I'm sure," said our hero, laughing with the best grace imaginable. " Well! I am glad you have found me out in this manner, though I lose the eighth part of a bet of a hundred guineas by it."

He explained the wager, and begged the customhouse officer to keep his secret, which he promised to do faithfully, and assured him, that " he should be happy to do any thing in his power to serve him." Whilst he was uttering these last words, there came in a snug, but soft looking Englishman, who opining from the words " happy to do any thing in my power to serve you," that O'Mooney was a friend of the customhouse officer's, and encouraged by something affable and good natured in our hero's countenance, crept up to him, and whispered a request—" Could you tell a body, sir, how to get out of the customhouse a very valuable box of Sèvre china, that has been *lay*ing in the customhouse three weeks, and which I was commissioned to get out if I could, and bring up to town for a lady."

As a lady was in the case, O'Mooney's gallantry instantly made his good nature effective. The box of Sèvre china was produced, and opened only as a matter of form, and only as a matter of curiosity its contents were examined—a beautiful set of Sèvre china and a pendule, said to have belonged to M. Egalité! These things must be intended, said Phelim, for some lady of superior taste or fortune.

As Phelim was a proficient in the Socratic art of putting judicious interrogatories, he was soon happily master of the principal points it concerned him to know: he learnt that the lady was rich—a spinster—of full age—at her own disposal—living with a single female companion at Blackheath—furnishing a house there in a superior style—had two carriages—her christian name Mary—her surname Sharperson.

O'Mooney, by the blessing of God, it shall soon be, thought Phelim. He politely offered the Englishman a place in his chaise for himself and Sèvre china, as it was for a lady, and would run great hazard in the stage, which besides was full. Mr. Queasy, for that was our soft Englishman's name, was astonished by our hero's condescension and affability, especially as he heard him called Sir John; he bowed sundry times as low, as the fear of losing his wig would permit, and accepted the polite offer with many thanks for himself and the lady concerned.

Sir John Bull's chaise and four was soon ready; and Queasy, seated in the corner of it, and the Sèvre china safely stowed between his knees—Captain Murray, a Scotch officer, was standing at the inn door, whose eyes were intently fixed on the letters that were worked in nails on the top of Sir John's trunk; the letters were P. O'M. Our hero, whose eyes were at least as quick as the Scotchman's, was alarmed lest this should lead to a second detection. He called instantly, with his usual presence of mind, to the hostler, and desired him to uncord *that* trunk, as it was not to go with him, raising his voice loud enough for all the *yard* to hear, he added—"It is not mine at all, it belongs to my friend Mr. O'Mooney, let it be sent after me, at leisure, by the waggon, as directed, to the care of Sir John Bull."

Our hero was now giving his invention a prodigious quantity of superfluous trouble; and upon this occasion, as upon most others, he was more in danger from excess than deficiency of ingenuity; he was like the man in the fairy tale, who was obliged to tie his legs lest he should outrun the object of which he was in pursuit. The Scotch officer, though his eyes were fixed on the letters P. O'M. had none of the suspicions which Phelim was counteracting, he was only considering how he could ask for the third place in Sir John's chaise during the next stage, as he was in great haste to get to town upon particular business, and there were no other horses at the inn. When he heard that the heavy baggage was to go by the waggon, he took courage, and made his request. It was instantly granted by the good-natured Hibernian, who showed as much hospitality about his chaise, as if it had been his house. Away they drove as fast as they could. Fresh dan-

gers awaited him at the next inn—He left his hat upon the table in the hall whilst he went into the parlour, and when he returned, he heard some person inquiring what Irish gentleman was there. Our hero was terribly alarmed, for he saw that his hat was in the inquirer's hand, and he recollected that the name of Phelim O'Mooney was written in it. This, the inquisitive gentleman did not see, for it was written in no very legible characters on the leather within side of the front; but 'F. Guest, Hatter, Dame-street, Dublin,' was a printed advertisement that could not be mistaken, and *that* was pasted within the crown. O'Mooney's presence of mind did not forsake him upon this emergency.

"My good sir," said he, turning to Queasy, who, without hearing one word of what was passing, was coming out of the parlour with his own hat and gloves in his hand; "My good sir," continued he, loading him with parcels, "will you have the goodness to see these put into my carriage—I'll take care of your hat and gloves," added O'Mooney in a low voice. Queasy surrendered his hat and gloves instantly, unknowing wherefore; then squeezed forward with his load through the crowd, crying—"Waiter! hostler! pray somebody put these into Sir John Bull's chaise."

Sir John Bull, equipped with Queasy's hat, marched deliberately through the defile, bowing with the air of at least an English county member to this side and to that, as way was made for him to his carriage. No one suspected, that the hat belonged to him; no one, indeed, thought of the hat, for all eyes were fixed upon the man; seated in the carriage, he threw money to the waiter, hostler, and boots, and drew up the glass, bidding the postillion drive on. By this cool self possession our hero effected his retreat with successful generalship, leaving his new Dublin beaver behind him, without regret, as bona waviata. Queasy, before whose eyes things passed continually without his seeing them, thanked Sir John for the care he had taken of his hat, drew on his gloves, and calculated aloud how long they should be going to the next stage. At the first town they passed through, O'Mooney bought a new hat, and Queasy deplored the unaccountable mistake by which Sir John's hat had been forgotten. No further *mistakes* happened upon the journey. The travellers rattled on, and neither 'stinted nor stayed,' till they arrived at Blackheath, at Miss Sharperson's. Sir John set Queasy down without having given him the least hint of his designs upon the lady; but as he helped him out with the Sèvre china, he looked through the large opening double doors of the hall, and slightly said—"Upon my word this seems to be a handsome house; it would be worth looking at, if the family were not at home."

"I am morally sure, Sir John," said the soft Queasy, "that Miss Sharperson would be happy to let you see the house to night, and this minute, if she knew you were at the door, and who you were, and all your civility about me and the china. —Do pray walk in."

"Not for the world—a gentleman could not do such a thing without an invitation from the lady of the house herself."

"Oh, if that's all! I'll step up myself to the young lady—I'm certain she'll be proud———"

"Mr. Queasy—by no means—I would not have the lady disturbed for the world, at this unseasonable hour.—It is too late—quite too late."

"Not at all, begging pardon, Sir John," said Queasy, taking out his watch: "only just tea time by me.—Not at all unseasonable for any body; besides, the message is of my own head—all you know, if not well taken——"

Up the great staircase he made bold to go on his mission, as he thought, in defiance of Sir John's better judgment. He returned in a few minutes with a face of self-complacent exultation, *and* Miss Sharperson's compliments, and begs Sir John Bull will walk up and rest himself with a dish of tea, and has her thanks to him for the china.

Now Queasy, who had the highest possible opinion of Sir John Bull and of Miss Sharperson, whom he thought the two people of the greatest consequence and affability, had formed the notion that they were made for each other, and that it must be a match if they could but meet. The meeting he had now happily contrived and effected; and he had done his part for his friend, Sir John, with Miss Sharperson, by as many exaggerations as he could utter in five minutes, concerning his purdigious politeness and courage, his fine person and carriage, his ancient family, and vast connexions and importance wherever he appeared on the road, at inns and all over England. He had previously, during the journey, done his part for his friend Miss Sharperson with Sir John, by stating, that—"she had a large fortune left her by her mother, and was to have twice as much from her grandmother; that she had thousands upon thousands in the funds, and an estate of two thousand a year, called Rascàlly, in Scotland, beside plate and jewels without end."

Thus prepared, how could this lady and gentleman meet without falling desperately in love with each other!

Though a servant in handsome livery appeared ready to show Sir John up the great staircase, Mr. Queasy acted as gentleman usher, or rather as showman. He nodded to Sir John, as they passed across a long gallery and through an antichamber, threw open the doors of various apartments, as

he went along, crying—" Peep in ! peep in ! peep in here! peep in there !—Is not this spacious ? Is not this elegant ? Is not that grand ? Did I say too much ?" continued he rubbing his hands with delight. " Did you ever see so magnificent, and such highly polished steel grates out of Lon'on ?"

Sir John, conscious that the servant's eyes were upon him, smiled at this question, " looked superior down," and though with reluctant complaisance he leaned his body to this side or to that, as Queasy pulled or swayed, yet he appeared totally regardless of the man's vulgar reflections. He had seen every thing as he passed, and was surprised at all he saw ; but he evinced not the slightest symptom of astonishment. He was now ushered into a spacious well lighted apartment : he entered with the easy unembarrassed air of a man, who was perfectly accustomed to such a home. His quick coup d'œil took in the whole at a single glance. Two magnificent candelabras stood on an Egyptian table at the farther end of the room, and the lights were reflected on all sides from mirrors of no common size. Nothing seemed worthy to attract our hero's attention but the lady of the house, whom he approached with an air of distinguished respect. She was reclining on a Turkish sofa—her companion seated beside her, tuning a harp. Miss Sharperson half rose to receive Sir John : he paid his compliments with an easy, yet respectful air. He was thanked for his civilities to *the person*, who had been commissioned to bring the box of Sèvre china from Deal.

" Vastly sorry it should have been so troublesome," Miss Sharperson said, in a voice fashionably unintelligible, and with a most becoming yet intimidating nonchalance of manner. Intimidating it might have been to any man but our hero ; he who had the happy talent of catching, wherever he went, the reigning manner of the place, replied to the lady in equal strains ; and she, in her turn, seemed to look upon him more as her equal. Tea and coffee were served. *Nothings* were talked of quite easily by Sir John. He practised the art " not to admire," so as to give a justly high opinion of his taste, consequence, and knowledge of the world. Miss Sharperson, though her nonchalance was much diminished, continued to maintain a certain dignified reserve, whilst her companion, Miss Felicia Flat, condescended to ask Sir John, who had doubtless seen every fine house in England and on the continent, his opinion with respect to the furniture and finishing of the room, the placing of the Egyptian tables and the candelabras.

No mortal could have guessed by Sir John Bull's air when he heard this question, that he had never seen a candelabra before in his life. He was so much, and yet seemingly so little upon his guard, he dealt so dexterously in generals, and *evaded* particulars so delicately, that he went through this

dangerous conversation triumphantly. Careful not to protract his visit beyond the bounds of propriety, he soon rose to take leave, and he mingled "intrusion, regret, late hour, happiness, and honour," so charmingly in his parting compliment as to leave the most favourable impression on the minds of both the ladies, and to procure for himself an invitation to see the house the next morning.

The first day was now ended, and our hero had been detected but once. He went to rest this night well satisfied with himself, but much more occupied with the hopes of marrying the heiress of Rascàlly than of winning a paltry bet.

The next day he waited upon the ladies in high spirits. Neither of them was *visible*, but Mr. Queasy had orders to show him the house, which he did with much exultation, dwelling particularly in his praises on the beautiful high polish of the steel grates. Queasy boasted, that it was he who had recommended the ironmonger, who furnished the house in that line; and that his bill, as he was proud to state, amounted to *many many* hundreds. Sir John, who did not attend to one word Queasy said, went to examine the map of the Rascàlly estate, which was unrolled, and he had leisure to count the number of lords' and ladies' visiting tickets which lay upon the chimney piece. He saw names of people of the first quality and respectability: it was plain, that Miss Sharperson must be a lady of high family as well as large fortune, else she would not be visited by persons of such distinction. Our hero's passion for her increased every moment. Her companion, Miss Flat, now appeared, and entered very freely into conversation with Sir John, and as he perceived that she was commissioned to sit in judgment upon him, he evaded all her leading questions, with the skill of an Irish witness; but, without giving any Hibernian answers. She was fairly at fault. Miss Sharperson at length appeared elegantly dressed: her person was genteel and her face rather pretty. Sir John, at this instant, thought her beautiful, or seemed to think so. The ladies interchanged looks, and afterward Sir John found a softness in his fair one's manner, a languishing tenderness in her eyes, in the tone of her voice, and at the same time a modest perplexity and reserve about her, which altogether persuaded him, that he was quite right, and his brother quite wrong *in fait d'amour*. Miss Flat appeared now to have the most self possession of the three, and Miss Sharperson looked at her, from time to time, as if she asked leave to be in love. Sir John's visit lasted a full half hour, before he was sensible of having been five minutes engaged in this delightful conversation.

Miss Sharperson's coach now came to the door; he handed her into it, and she gave him a parting look, which satisfied

him all was yet safe in her heart. Miss Flat, as he handed her into the carriage, said, " Perhaps they should meet Sir John at Tunbridge, where they were going in a few days." She added some words as she seated herself, which he scarcely noticed at the time, but they recurred afterwards disagreeably to his memory. The words were, " I'm so glad we've a roomy coach, for of all things it annoys me to be *squeedged* in a carriage."

This word *squeedged*, as he had not been used to it in Ireland, sounded to him extremely vulgar, and gave him suspicions of the most painful nature. He had the precaution, before he left Blackheath, to go into several shops, and to inquire something more concerning his fair ladies. All he heard was much to their advantage, that is, much to the advantage of Miss Sharperson's fortune. All agreed that she was a rich Scotch heiress. A rich Scotch heiress, Sir John wisely considered, might have an humble companion who spoke bad English. He concluded that *squeedged* was Scotch, blamed himself for his suspicions, and was more in love with his mistress and with himself than ever. As he returned to town, he framed the outline of a triumphant letter to his brother on his approaching marriage. The bet was a matter, at present, totally beneath his consideration. However, we must do him the justice to say, that like a man of honour he resolved, that as soon as he had won the lady's heart he would *candidly* tell her his circumstances, and then leave her the choice either to marry him or break her heart as she pleased. Just as he had formed this generous resolution, at a sudden turn of the road, he overtook Miss Sharperson's coach—he bowed and looked in as he passed, when to his astonishment, he saw, *squeedged* up in a corner by Miss Felicia, Mr. Queasy. He thought that this was a blunder in etiquette that would never have been made in Ireland. Perhaps his mistress was of the same opinion, for she hastily pulled down the blind as Sir John passed. A cold qualm came over the lover's heart. He lost no time in idle doubts and suspicions, but galloped on to town as fast as he could, and went immediately to call upon the Scotch officer with whom he had travelled, and whom he knew to be keen and prudent. He recollected the map of the Rascally estate, which he saw in Miss Sharperson's breakfast room, and he remembered, that the lands were said to lie in that part of Scotland from which Captain Murray came: from him he resolved to inquire into the state of the premises, before he should offer himself as tenant for life. Captain Murray assured him that there was no such place as Rascally in that part of Scotland; that he had never heard of any such person as Miss Sharperson, though he was acquainted with every family and every estate in the neighbourhood

where she fabled hers to be. O'Mooney drew from memory the map of the Rascally estate. Captain Murray examined the boundaries, and assured him, that his cousin, the General's lands, joined his own, at the very spot which he described, and that unless two straight lines could enclose a space, the Rascally estate could not be found.

Sir John, naturally of a warm temper, proceeded, however, with prudence. The Scotch officer admired his sagacity in detecting this adventurer. Sir John waited at his hotel for Queasy, who had promised to call to let him know when the ladies would go to Tunbridge. Queasy came. Nothing could equal his astonishment and dismay when he was told the news.

" No such place as the Rascally estate. Then I am an undone man ! an undone man !" cried poor Queasy, bursting into tears, " but I'm certain it's impossible, and you'll find, Sir John, you've been misinformed. I would stake my life upon it, Miss Sharperson's a rich heiress, and has a rich grandmother. Why, she's five hundred pounds in my debt, and I know of her being thousands and thousands in the books of as good men as myself, to whom I've recommended her, which I wouldn't have done for my life, if I had not known her to be solid. You'll find she'll prove a rich heiress, Sir John."

Sir John hoped so, but the proofs were not yet satisfactory. Queasy determined to inquire about her payments to certain creditors at Blackheath, and promised to give a decisive answer in the morning. O'Mooney saw, that this man was too great a fool to be a knave : his perturbation was evidently the perturbation of a dupe, not of an accomplice ; Queasy was made to " be an anvil, not a hammer." In the midst of his own disappointment, our good-natured Hibernian really pitied this poor currier.

The next morning Sir John went early to Blackheath. All was confusion at Miss Sharperson's house ; the steps covered with grates and furniture of all sorts ; porters carrying out looking-glasses, Egyptian tables, and candelabras ; the noise of workmen was heard in every apartment ; and louder than all the rest, O'Mooney heard the curses, that were denounced against his rich heiress—curses, such as are bestowed on a swindler in the moment of detection, by the tradesman whom she has ruined.

Our hero, who was of a most happy temper, congratulated himself upon having, by his own wit and prudence escaped making the practical bull of marrying a female swindler.

Now that Phelim's immediate hopes of marrying a rich heiress were over, his bet with his brother appeared to him of more consequence, and he rejoiced in the reflection, that this

was the third day he had spent in England and that he had but once been detected.—The ides of March were come, but not passed!

"My lads," said he to the workmen, who were busy in carrying out the furniture from Miss Sharperson's house, "all hands are at work, I see, in saving what they can from the wreck of *the Sharperson.* She was as well fitted out a vessel, and in as gallant trim as any ship upon the face of the earth."

"Ship upon the face of the *yearth!*" repeated an English porter with a sneer, "Ship upon the face of the water, you should say, master, but I take it you be's an Irishman."

O'Mooney had reason to be particularly vexed at being detected by this man, who spoke a miserable jargon, and who seemed not to have a very extensive range of ideas. He was one of those half-witted geniuses, who catch at the shadow of an Irish bull. In fact, Phelim had merely made a lapsus linguæ, and had used an expression, justifiable by the authority of the elegant and witty lord Chesterfield, who said—no—who *wrote*, that the English navy is the finest navy *upon the face of the earth.*—But it was in vain for our hero to argue the point—he was detected—no matter how or by whom. But this was only his second detection, and three of his four days of probation were past.

He dined this day at Captain Murray's. In the room in which they dined there was a picture of the Captain, painted by Romney. Sir John, who happened to be seated opposite to it, observed, that it was a very fine picture—the more he looked at it the more he liked it. His admiration was at last unluckily expressed—he said, "that's an incomparable, an inimitable picture, it is absolutely *more like than the original.*"*

A keen Scotch lady in company smiled and repeated—"*More like than the original!* Sir John, if I had not been told by my relative here, that you were an Englishman, I should have set you *doon*, from that speech, for an Irishman."

This unexpected detection brought the colour, for a moment, into Sir John's face; but immediately recovering his presence of mind, he said.—

"That was, I acknowledge, an excellent Irish bull; but in the course of my travels I have heard as good English bulls as Irish."

To this Captain Murray politely acceded, and he produced some laughable instances in support of the assertion, which gave the conversation a new turn.

O'Mooney felt extremely obliged to the Captain for this, especially as he saw, by his countenance, that he also had suspicions of the truth. The first moment he found himself

* This bull was really made.

alone with Murray, our hero said to him—" Murray, you are too good a fellow to impose upon, even in jest. Your keen countrywoman guessed the truth—I am an Irishman, but not a swindler. You shall hear why I conceal my country and name; only keep my secret till to-morrow night, or I shall lose a hundred guineas by my frankness."

O'Mooney then explained to him the nature of his bet.—" This is only my third detection, and half of it voluntary, I might say, if I chose to higgle, which I scorn to do."

Captain Murray was so much pleased by this openness, that as he shook hands with O'Mooney, he said—" Give me leave to tell you, sir, that even if you should lose your bet by this frank behaviour, you will have gained a better thing—a friend."

In the evening our hero went with his friend and a party of gentlemen to Maidenhead, near which place a battle was to be fought next day, between two famous pugilists, Bourke and Belcher. At the appointed time the combatants appeared upon the stage, the whole boxing corps and the gentlemen *amateurs* crowded to behold the spectacle. Phelim O'Mooney's heart beat for the Irish champion Bourke: but he kept a guard upon his tongue, and had even the forbearance not to bet upon his countryman's head. How many rounds were fought, and how many minutes the fight lasted, how many blows were *put in* on each side, or which was the *game man* of the two, we forbear to decide or relate, as all this has been settled in the newspapers of the day; where also it was remarked, that Bourke, who lost the battle,—" was put into a postchaise, and left *standing* half an hour, while another fight took place. This was very scandalous on the part of his friends, says the humane newspaper historian, as the poor man might possibly be dying."

Our hero O'Mooney's heart again got the better of his head. Forgetful of his bet, forgetful of every thing but humanity, he made his way up to the chaise, where Bourke was left—" How are you, my gay fellow ?" said he. " Can you *see at all with the eye that's knocked out ?*"

The brutal populace, who overheard this question, set up a roar of laughter—" A bull ! a bull ! an Irish bull ! Did you hear the question this Irish gentleman asked his countryman ?"

O'Mooney was detected a fourth time, and this time he was not ashamed. There was one man in the crowd who did not join in the laugh : a poor Irishman, of the name of Terence M'Dermod. He had in former times gone out a grousing, near Cork, with our hero; and the moment he heard his voice, he sprang forward, and with uncouth but honest demonstrations of joy, exclaimed,—" Ah, my dear master! my dear

young master! Phelim O'Mooney, esq. And I have found your honour alive again? By the blessing of God above, I'll never part you now, till I die; and I'll go to the world's end to sarve *yees*."

O'Mooney wished him at the world's end this instant, yet could not prevail upon himself to check this affectionate follower of the O'Mooneys. He, however, put half a crown into his hand, and hinted, that if he wished really to serve him, it must be at some other time. The poor fellow threw down the money, saying—"He would never leave him. Bid me do any thing, barring that.—No, you shall never part me. Do what you plase with me, still I'll be close to your heart, like your own shadow: knock me down if you will and wilcome, ten times a day, and I'll be up again like a ninepin: only let me sarve your honour, I'll ask no wages, nor take none."

There was no withstanding all this; and whether our hero's good nature deceived him we shall not determine, but he thought it most prudent, as he could not get rid of Terence, to take him into his service, to let him into his secret, to make him swear that he would never utter the name of Phelim O'Mooney during the remainder of this day. Terence heard the secret of the bet with joy, entered into the jest with all the readiness of an Irishman, and, with equal joy and readiness, swore by the hind leg of the holy lamb, that he would never mention, even to his own dog, the name of Phelim O'Mooney, esq. good or bad, "till past twelve o'clock; and further, that he would, till the clock should strike that hour, call his master Sir John Bull, and nothing else, to all men, women, and children, upon the floor of God's creation."

Satisfied with the fulness of this oath, O'Mooney resolved to return to town with his man Terence M'Dermod. He however contrived, before he got there, to make a practical bull, by which he was detected a fifth time. He got into the coach, which was driving *from* London, instead of that which was driving *to* London, and he would have been carried rapidly to Oxford, had not his man Terence, after they had proceeded a mile and a half on the wrong road, put his head down from the top of the coach, crying, as he looked in at the window—"Master, Sir John Bull, are you there? Do you know we're in the wrong box, going to Oxford?"

"Your master's an Irishman, I dare to say, as well as yourself," said the coachman, as he let Sir John out. He walked back to Maidenhead, and took a chaise to town.

It was six o'clock when he got to London, and he went into a coffee-house to dine. He sat down beside a gentleman who was reading the newspaper.—"Any news to-day, sir?"

The gentleman told him the news of the day, and then began to read aloud some paragraphs in a strong Hibernian accent. Our hero was sorry that he had met with another countryman; but he resolved to set a guard upon his lips, and he knew that his own accent could not betray him. The stranger read on till he came to a trial about a legacy, which an old woman had left to her cats.—O'Mooney exclaimed—"I hate cats almost as much as old women; and if I had been the English minister, I would have laid the *dog tax* upon cats."

"If you had been the *Irish* minister, you mean," said the stranger, smiling; "for I perceive now you are a countryman of my own."

"How can you think so, sir," said O'Mooney; "you have no reason to suppose so from my accent, I believe."

"None in life, quite the contrary; for you speak remarkably pure English—not the least note or half note of the brogue; but there's another sort of freemason sign by which we Hibernians know one another and are known all over the globe. Whether to call it a confusion of expression or of ideas, I can't tell. Now an Englishman, if he had been saying what you did, sir, just now, would have taken time to separate the dog and the tax, and he would have put the tax upon cats, and let the dogs go about their business." Our hero, with his usual good humour, acknowledged himself to be fairly detected.

"Well, sir," said the stranger, "if I had not found you out before by the blunder, I should be sure now you were my countryman by your good humour. An Irishman can take what's said to him, provided no affront's meant, with more good humour than any man on earth."

"Ay, that he can," cried O'Mooney; "he lends himself, like the whale, to be tickled even by the fellow with the harpoon, till he finds what he is about, and then he pays away, and pitches the fellow, boat and all, to the devil. Ah, countryman! you would give me credit indeed for my good humour, if you knew what danger you have put me in by detecting me for an Irishman. I have been found out six times, and if I blunder twice more before twelve o'clock this night, I shall lose a hundred guineas by it: but I will make sure of my bet; for I will go home straight this minute, lock myself up in my room, and not say a word to any mortal till the watchman cries 'past twelve o'clock,' then the fast and long lent of my tongue will be fairly over; and if you'll meet me, my dear friend, at the King's Arms, we will have a good supper and keep Easter for ever."

Phelim, pursuant to his resolution, returned to his hotel, and shut himself up in his room, where he remained in perfect silence and consequent safety till about nine o'clock. Sudden-

ly he heard a great huzzaing in the street; he looked out of the window, and saw that all the houses in the street were illuminated. His landlady came bustling into his apartment, followed by waiters with candles. His spirits instantly rose, though he did not clearly know the cause of the rejoicings.—"I give you joy, ma'am. What are you all illuminating for?" said he to his landlady.

"Thank you, sir, with all my heart.—I am not sure. It is either for a great victory or the peace.—Bob—waiter—step out and inquire for the gentleman."

The gentleman preferred stepping out to inquire for himself. The illuminations were in honour of the peace. He totally forgot his bet, his silence, and his prudence, in his sympathy with the general joy. He walked rapidly from street to street, admiring the various elegant devices. A crowd was standing before the windows of a house, that was illuminated with extraordinary splendour. He inquired whose it was, and was informed, that it belonged to a contractor, who had made an immense fortune by the war.

"Then I'm sure these illuminations of his for the peace are none of the most sincere," said O'Mooney. The mob were of his opinion; and Phelim, who was now, alas! worked up to the proper pitch for blundering, added, by way of pleasing his audience still more—"If this contractor had *illuminated* in character, it should have been with *dark lanterns*."

"Should it? by Jasus! that would be an Irish illumination," cried some one. "Arrah, honey! you're an Irishman, whoever you are, and have spoke your mind in character."

Sir John Bull was vexed that the piece of wit which he had aimed at the contractor had recoiled upon himself.—"It is always, as my countryman observed, by having too much wit that I blunder. The deuce take me, if I sport a single bon mot more this night.—This is only my seventh detection, I have an eighth blunder still *to the good*; and if I can but keep my wit to myself, till I am out of Purgatory, then I will be in Heaven, and may sing Io triumphe in spite of my brother."

Fortunately Phelim had not made it any part of his bet, that he should not speak to himself in Irish idiom, or that he should not *think* a bull. Resolved to be as obstinately silent as a monk of la Trappe, he once more shut himself up in his cell, and fell fast asleep—dreamed that fat bulls of Basan encompassed him round about—that he ran down a steep hill to escape them—that his foot slipped—he rolled to the bottom—felt the bull's horns in his side—heard the bull bellowing in his ears—wakened—and found Terence M'Dermod bellowing at his room door.

"Sir John Bull! Sir John Bull! murder! murder! my dear master, Sir John Bull! murder, robbery, and reward! let me in! for the love of the holy Virgin! they are all after you!"

"Who? are you drunk, Terence?" said Sir John, opening the door.

"No, but they are mad—all mad."

"Who?"

"The constable. They are all mad entirely, and the lord mayor, all along with your honour's making me swear I would not tell your name. Sure they are all coming armed in a body, to put you in jail for a forgery, unless I run back and tell them the truth—will I?"

"First tell me the truth, blunderer!"

"I'll make my affidavit I never blundered, plase your honour, but just went to the merchant's as you ordered, with the draught, signed with the name I swore not to utter till past twelve. I presents the draught and waits to be paid. 'Are you Mr. O'Mooney's servant?' says one of the clerks after a while.—'No, sir, not at all, sir,' said I, 'I'm Sir John Bull's' at your sarvice.'—He puzzles and puzzles and asks me did I bring the draught, and was that your writing at the bottom of it. I still said it was my master's writing, *Sir John Bull's*, and no other. They whispered from one up to t'other, and then said it was a forgery, as I overheard, and must go before the mayor. With that, while the master, who was called down to be examined as to his opinion, was putting on his glasses to spell it out, I gives them, one and all, the slip, and whips out of the street door and home to give your honour notice, and have been breaking my heart at the door this half hour to make you hear, and now you have it all."

"I am in a worse dilemma now than when between the horns of the bull," thought Sir John—"I must now either tell my real name, avow myself an Irishman, and so lose my bet, or else go to jail."

He preferred going to jail. He resolved to pretend to be dumb, and he charged Terence not to betray him. The officers of justice came to take him up—Sir John resigned himself to them, making signs that he could not speak. He was carried before a magistrate. The merchant had never seen Mr. Phelim O'Mooney, but could swear to his hand-writing and signature, having many of his letters and draughts. The draught in question was produced. Sir John Bull would neither acknowledge nor deny the signature, but in dumb show made signs of innocence. No art or persuasion could make him speak—he kept his finger on his lips. One of the bailiffs offered to open Sir John's mouth. Sir John clenched his hand in token, that if they used violence he knew his rem-

edy. To the magistrate he was all bows and respect—but the law, in spite of civility, must take its course.

Terence M'Dermod beat his breast, and called upon all the saints in the Irish calendar when he saw the committal actually made out, and his dear master given over to the constables. Nothing but his own oath and his master's commanding eye, which was fixed upon him at this instant, could have made him forbear to utter, what he had never in his life been before so strongly tempted to tell—the truth.

Determined to win his wager, our hero suffered *himself* to be carried to a lock-up house, and persisted in keeping silence till the clock struck twelve! Then the charm was broken, and he spoke. He began talking to himself, and singing as loud as he possibly could. The next morning Terence, who was no longer bound by his oath to conceal Phelim's name, hastened to his master's correspondent in town, told the whole story, and O'Mooney was liberated. Having won his bet by his wit and steadiness he had now the prudence to give up these adventuring schemes, to which he had so nearly become a dupe; he returned immediately to Ireland to his brother, and determined to settle quietly to business. His good brother paid him the hundred guineas most joyfully, declaring that he had never spent a hundred guineas better in his life, than in recovering a brother. Phelim had now conquered his foolish dislike to trade; his brother took him into partnership, and Phelim O'Mooney never relapsed into Sir John Bull.

CONCLUSION.

Unable any longer to support the tone of irony, we joyfully speak in our own characters, and explicitly declare our opinion, that the Irish are an ingenious, generous people; that the bulls and blunders, of which they are accused, are often imputable to their neighbours, or that they are justifiable by ancient precedents, or that they are produced by their habits of using figurative and witty language. By what their good humour is produced we know not; but that it exists, we are certain. In Ireland, the countenance and heart expand at the approach of wit and humour; the poorest labourer forgets his poverty and toil in the pleasure of enjoying a joke. Amongst all classes of the people, provided no malice is obviously meant, none is apprehended. That such is the character of the majority of the nation, there cannot *to us* be a

more convincing and satisfactory proof, than the manner in which a late publication* was received in Ireland. The Irish were the first to laugh at the caricatura of their ancient foibles, and it was generally taken merely as good humoured raillery, not as insulting satire. If gratitude for this generosity has now betrayed us unawares into the language of panegyric, we may hope for pardon from the liberal of both nations. Those who are thoroughly acquainted with Ireland will most readily acknowledge the justice of our praises; those who are ignorant of the country will not, perhaps, be displeased, to have their knowledge of the people of Ireland extended. Many foreign pictures of Irishmen are as grotesque and absurd as the Chinese pictures of lions; having never seen that animal, the Chinese can paint him only from the descriptions of voyagers which are sometimes ignorantly, sometimes wantonly, sometimes maliciously exaggerated.

In M. de Voltaire's Age of Lewis the Fourteenth, we find the following passage.—" Some nations seem made to be subject to others. The English have always had over the Irish the superiority of genius, wealth, and arms. The *superiority which the whites have over the negroes.*"†

A note in a subsequent edition informs us, that the injurious expression—" *The superiority which the whites have over the negroes,*" was erased by M. de Voltaire; and his editor subjoins his own opinion.—" The nearly savage state in which Ireland was when she was conquered, her superstition, the oppression exercised by the English, the religious fanaticism which divides the Irish into two hostile nations, such are the causes which have held down this people in depression and weakness. Religious hatreds are appeased, and this country has recovered her liberty. The Irish no longer yield to the English, either in industry or in information."‡

The last sentence of this note might, if it had reached the eyes or ears of the incensed Irish historian, Mr. O'Halloran, have assuaged his wrath against Voltaire for the unguarded expression in the text; unless the amor patriæ of the historian, like the amour propre of some individuals, instead of being gratified by congratulations on their improvements, should be

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* Castle Rackrent.

† Il y a des nations dont l'une semble faite pour être soumise à l'autre. Les Anglois ont toujours eu sur les Irlandois la supériorité du génie, des richesses, et des armes. *La supériorité que les blancs ons sur les noirs.*"

‡ " On lisait dans les premières éditions, *la supériorité que les blancs ont sur les négres.* M. de Voltaire effaça cette expression injurieuse. L' état presque sauvage où étoit l'Irlande lorsqu'elle fut conquise, la superstition, l'oppression exercée par les Anglois, le fanatisme religieux qui divise les Irlandois en deux nations ennemies, telles sont les causes qui ont retenues ce peuple dans l'abaissement et dans la foiblesse. Les haines religieuses se sont assoupies, et elle a repris sa liberté. *Les Irelandois ne le cédent plus aux Anglois ni en industrie ni en lumières.*"

intent upon demonstrating, that there never was any thing to improve. As we were neither *born nor bred* in Ireland, we cannot be supposed to possess this amor patriæ in its full force; we profess to be attached to the country only for its merits; we acknowledge, that it is a matter of indifference to us whether the Irish derive their origin from the Spaniards, or the Milesians, or the Welsh: we are not so violently anxious as we ought to be, to determine, whether or not the language spoken by the Phœnician slave, in Terence's play, was Irish; nay, we should not break our hearts, if it could never be satisfactorily proved, that Albion is only another name for Ireland.* We moreover candidly confess, that we are more interested in the fate of the present race of its inhabitants, than in the historian of St. Patrick, St. Facharis, St. Cormuc; the renowned Brien Boru; Tireldach, king of Connaught; M'Murrough, king of Leinster; Diarmod; Righ-Damnha; Labra-Loing-seach; Tighermas; Ollamh-Foldha; the M'Giolla-Phadraigs; or even the great William of Ogham; and by this declaration we have no fear of giving offence to any but rusty antiquaries. We think it somewhat more to the honour of Ireland to enumerate the names of some of the men of genius whom she has produced; Milton and Shakspeare stand unrivalled! but Ireland can boast of Usher, Boyle, Denham, Congreve, Molyneux, Farquhar, Sir Richard Steele, Bickerstaff, Sir Hans Sloane, Berkeley, Orrery, Parnel, Swift, T. Sheridan, Welsham, Bryan Robinson, Goldsmith, Sterne, Johnson,† Tickel, Brooke, Zeland, Hussey Burgh, three Hamiltons, Young, Charlemont, Macklin, Murphy Griffiths,‡ Mrs. Sheridan, Francis Sheridan, Kirwan, Brinsley Sheridan, and Burke.

We enter into no invidious comparisons; it is our sincere wish to conciliate both countries; and if in this slight essay we should succeed in diffusing a more just and enlarged idea of the Irish than has been generally entertained, we hope the English will deem it not an unacceptable service. Whatever might have been the policy of the English nation towards Ireland, whilst she was a separate kingdom, since the union it can no longer be her wish to depreciate the talents, or ridicule the language of Hibernians. One of the Czars of Russia used to take the cap and bells from his fool, and place it on the head of any of his subjects whom he wished to disgrace. The idea of extending such a punishment to a whole nation was ingenious, and magnanimous; but England cannot now put it into execution towards Ireland. Would it not be a practical bull to place the bells upon her own imperial head?

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* See O'Halloran's History of Ireland.
† Author of Chrysal, or adventures of a Guinea.
‡ Author of the beautiful moral tale Nourjahad.

APPENDIX.

The following collection of foreign bulls was given us by a man of letters who is now father of the French Academy.

RECUEIL DE BÊTISES.

Toutes les nations ont des contes plaisans de bêtises échappées non seulement à des personnes vraiment bêtes, mais aux distractions de gens qui ne sont pas sans esprit. Les Italiens ont leur *sproposite*, leur arlequin ses balourdises, les Anglois leurs *blunders*, les Irlandois leurs *bulls*.

Mademoiselle Maria Edgeworth ayant fait un recueil de ces derniers, je prends la liberté de lui offrir un petit recueil de nos bêtises qui méritent le nom qu'elles portent aussi bien que les *Irish bulls*. J'ai fait autrefois une dissertation où je recherchois quelle étoit la cause du rire qu'excitent les bêtises, et dans laquelle j'appuyois mon explication de beaucoup d'exemples et peut-être même du mien sans m'en appercevoir ; mais la femme d'esprit à qui j'ai addressé cette folie l'a perdue, et je n'ai pas pu la recouvrer.

Je me souviens seulement que j'y prouvois *savamment* que le rire excité par les bêtises est l'effect du contraste que nous saisissons entre l'effort que fait l'homme qui dit la bêtise, et le mauvais succès de son effort. J'assimilois la marche de l'esprit dans celui qui dit une bêtise, à ce qui arrive à un homme qui cherchant à marcher légèrement sur un pavé glissant, tombe lourdement, ou aux tours mal-adroit du paillasse de la foire. Si l'on veut examiner les bêtises rassemblées ici, on y trouvera toujours un effort manqué de ce genre.

Un homme, dont la femme avoit été saignée, interrogé le lendemain pourquoi elle ne paroissoit pas à table, répondit :—Elle garde la chambre : Morand l'a saignée hier, et une saignée affoiblit beaucoup quand elle est faite par un habile homme.

M. de Baville, intendant de Languedoc, avoit un secrétaire forte bête : il se servoit un jour de lui pour écrire au ministre sur des affaires très importantes et dicta ces mots : " Ne soyez point surpris de ce que je me sers d'une main étrangère pour vous écrire sur cet objet. Mon secrétaire est si bête qu'à ce moment même il ne s'apperçoit pas que je vous parle de lui."

On demandoit à un abbé de Laval Montmorency quel âge avoit son frère le maréchal dont il étoit l'ainé. " Dans deux ans," dit il, " nous serons du même âge."

On se préparoit à observer une éclipse, et le roi devoit assister à l'observation. M. de Jonville disoit à M. Cassini—" N'attendra-t-on pas le roi pour commencer l'eclipse ?"

Une femme du peuple qui avoit une petite fille malade avec le transport au cerveau, disoit au medicin, " Ah Monsieur, si vous l'aviez entendu cette nuit elle a déraisonnée comme une grande personne."

Un homme avoit parié 25 louis qu'il traverseroit le grand bassin des Thuileries par un froid très rigoureux ; il alla jusqu'au milieu, renonça à son entreprise, et revint par le même chemin en dissant, " J'aime mieux perdre vingt-cinq louis que d'avoir une fluxion de poitrine."

Un homme voyoit venir de loin un médecin de sa connoisance qui l'avoit traité plusieurs années auparavant dans une maladie ; il se détourna, et cacha son visage pour n'être pas reconnu. On lui demandoit " pourquoi." " C'est," dit il, " que je suis honteux devant lui de ce qu'il y a fort long tems que je n'ai été malade."

On demande à un homme qui vouloit vendre un cheval—" Votre cheval est-il peureux ?"—" Oh, point du tout," répondit-il, " il vient de passer plusieurs nuits tout seul dans son écurie."

Dans une querelle entre un père et son fils, le père reprochoit à celui-ci son ingratitude—" Je ne vous ai point d'obligations," disoit le fils, " vous m'avez fait beaucoup de tort ; si vous n'étiez point né, je serois à present l'héritier de mon grand père."

Un avare faisant son testament, se fit lui même son héritier.

Un homme voyoit un bateau si chargé que les bords en étoient à fleur d'eau : " ma foi," dit il, " si la rivière étoit un peu plus haute le bateau iroit à fond."

M. Hume, dans son histoire d'Angleterre, parlant de la conspiration attribuée aux Catholiques en 1678 sous Charles II. rapporte le mot d'un chevalier Player qui félicitoit la ville des précautions qu'elle avoit prises—" et sans lesquelles"—disoit il—" tous le citoyens auroient couru risque de se trouver égorgés le lendemain à leur réveil."

Le maire d'une petite ville, entendant une querelle dans la rue au milieu de la nuit, se leve du lit, et ouvrant la fenêtre crie aux passans, " Messieurs, me leverai-je ?"

Un sot faisoit compliment à une demoiselle dont la mère venoit de se marier en secondes noces avec un ancien ami de la maison—" Mademoiselle,"—lui dit-il—" je suis ravi de ce que monsieur votre père vient d'épouser madame votre mère."

Racine, qui avoit été toute sa vie courtisan très attentif, étoit enterré à Port Royal des champs dont les solitaires s'étoient attirés l'indignation de Louis XIV. M. de Boissy, célébre par ses distractions, disoit—" Racine n'auroit pas fait cela de son vivant."

On racontait dans une conversation que Monsieur de Buffon avoit disséqué une de ses cousines, et une femme se récrioit sur l'inhumanité de l'anatomiste. M. de Mairan lui dit—" Mais Madame elle étoit morte."

On parloit avec admiration de la belle vieillesse d'un homme de quatre vingt dix ans ; quelqu'un dit—" Cela vous étonne, messieurs ; si mon père n'étoit pas mort, il auroit à présent cent ans accomplis."

Mouet, de l'opera comique, conte qu'arrivant de Lyon, et ne voulant pas qu'on sut qu'il étoit à Paris, il recommanda à son laquais, supposé

qu'il fut rencontré, de dire qu'il étoit à Lyon. Le laquais trouve un ami de son maître qui lui en demande des nouvelles—" Il est à Lyon" —dit-il—" et il ne sera de retour que la semaine prochaine."—" Mais," continue le questionneur—" que portez vous la ?"—" Ce sont quelques provisions qu'il m'a envoyé chercher pour son dîner."

Un homme examinoit un dessin représentant la coupe d'un vaisseau construit en Hollande ; quelqu'un lui dit—" Est-ce que monsieur entend le hollandois."

Un homme de loi disoit qu'on ne pouvoit pas faire une stipulation valable avec un muet. Un des écoutans lui dit—" Monsieur le docteur, et avec un boiteux, seroit-elle bonne ?"

Un homme se plaignoit que la maison de son voisin lui ôtoit la vue d'une de ses fenêtres ; un autre lui dit—" Vous avez un remède, faites murer cette fenêtre."

Un homme ayant écrit á sa maitresse, avoit glissé le billet sous la porte, et puis s'avisant que la fille pourroit ne pas s'en appercevoir il en écrivit un autre en ces termes—" J'ai mis un billet sous votre porte ; prenez-y garde quand vous sortirez."

Un homme étant sur le point de marier sa fille unique, se brouille avec le pretendant, et dans sa colère il dit—" Non Monsieur, vous ne serez jamais mon gendre, et quand j'aurois cent filles uniques, je ne vous en donnerois pas une."

On avoit reçu à la grande poste une lettre avec cette addresse,—*à Monsieur mon fils, Rue*, &c. On alloit la mettre au rebut ; un commis s'y oppose, et dit qu'on trouvera à qui la lettre s'addresse. Dix ou douze jours se passent. On voit arriver un grand benet qui dit—" Messieurs, je viens savoir si on n'auroit pas gardé ici une lettre de mon cher père ?"—" Oui Monsieur," lui dit le commis, " la voila,"—On prête ce trait à Bouret, fermier général.

Milord Albemarle étant aux eaux d'Aix-la-Chapelle, et ne voulant pas être connu, ordonna à un nègre qui le servoit, si on lui demandoit qui étoit son maître de dire qu'il étoit françois. On ne manqua pas de faire la question au noir, qui répondit—" *Mon maître est françois, et moi aussi.*"

Un marchand, en finissant d'écrire une lettre à un de ses correspondans, mourut subitement. Son commis ajouta en P. S. " Depuis ma lettre écrite je suis mort ce matin. Mardi au soir 7 *ème*, &c."

Un petit marchand prétendoit avoir acheté trois sols ce qu'il vendoit pour deux. On lui représente que ce commerce le ruinera—" Ah," dit il, " je me sauve sur la quantité."

Le Chevalier de Lorenzi, étant à Florence, étoit allé se promener avec trois de ses amis à quelques lieues de la ville, à pied. Ils revenoient fort las ; la nuit approchoit ; il veut se reposer : on lui dit qu'il restoit quatres milles à faire, " Oh," dit-il, " nous sommes quatres ; ce n'est qu'un mille chacun."

On prétend qu'un fermier général voulant s'éviter l'ennui ou s'épargner les frais des lettres dont on l'accabloit au nouvel an, écrivoit au mois de Décembre à tous les employés de son département qu'il les dispensoit du cérémonial, et que ceux-ci lui réponderoient pour l'assurer qu'ils se conformeroient à ses ordres.

Maupertuis faisoit instruire un perroquet par son laquais, et vouloit qu'on lui apprit des mots extraordinaires. Depuis deux ans le laquais, enseignoit à l'animal à dire *monomotapa*, et le perroquet n'en disoit que des syllabes séparées. Maupertuis faisoit des reproches au lauquais—" Oh Monsieur"—dit celui ci—" cela ne va pas si vite ; je lui ai d'abord appris *mo* et puis *no*."—Vous êtes un bête," dit Maupertuis—" il faut lui dire le mot entier."—" Monsieur," reprend le laquais, " il faut lui donner le temps de comprendre."

Il y a en Italien une lettre pleine de *sproposite* assez plaisans. Un homme écrit à son ami, " Abbiamo avuto un famosissimo tremmoto che se per la misericordia de Dio avesse durato una mezza hora di piu, saremmo tutti andati al paradiso che Dio ce ne liberi. Vi mando quatordici pero e sono tutti boni christiani. A questa fiera i porei sono saliti al cielo. O ricevete, o non ricevete, questa datemene aviso."

THE END OF VOL. II.